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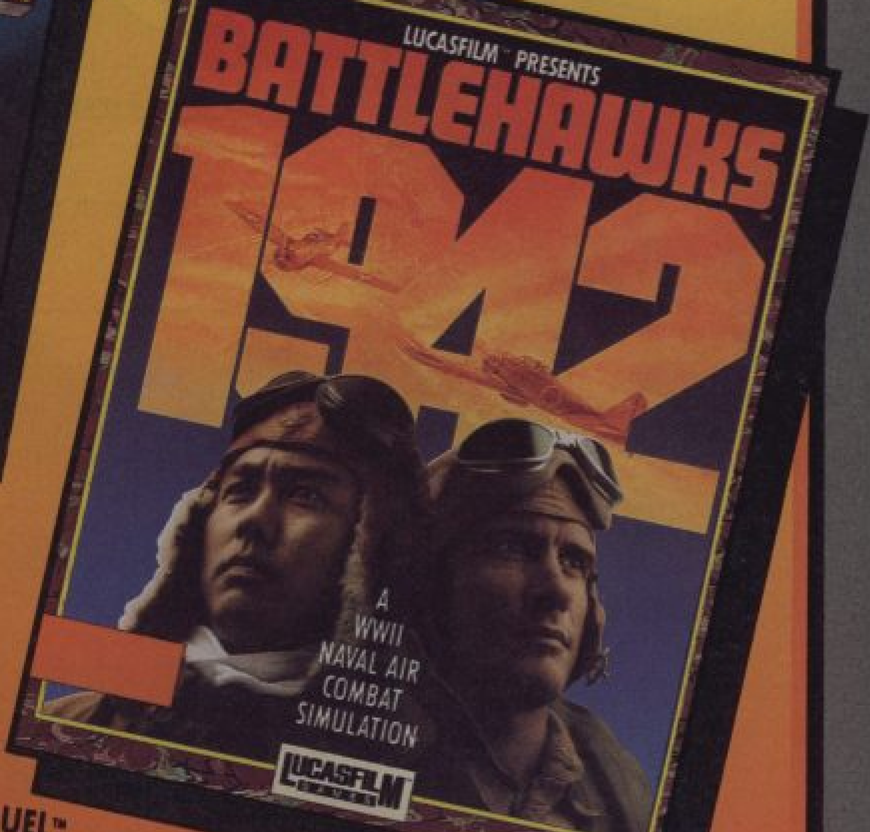
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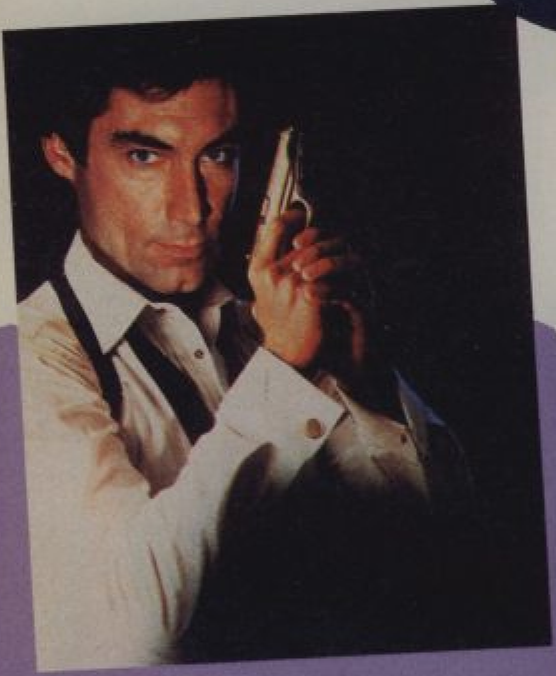
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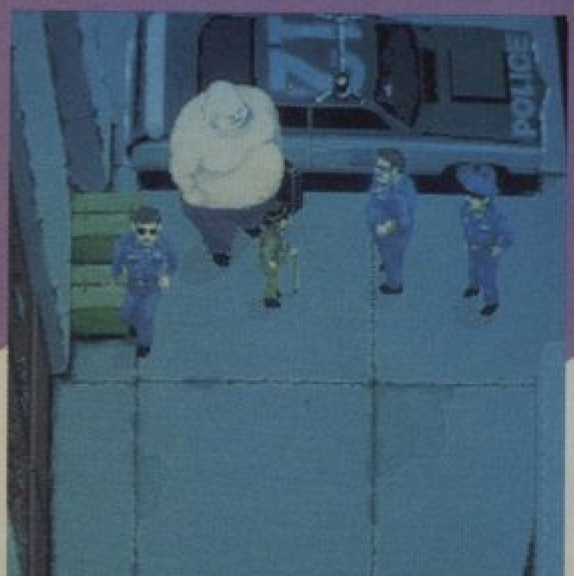
Contents



















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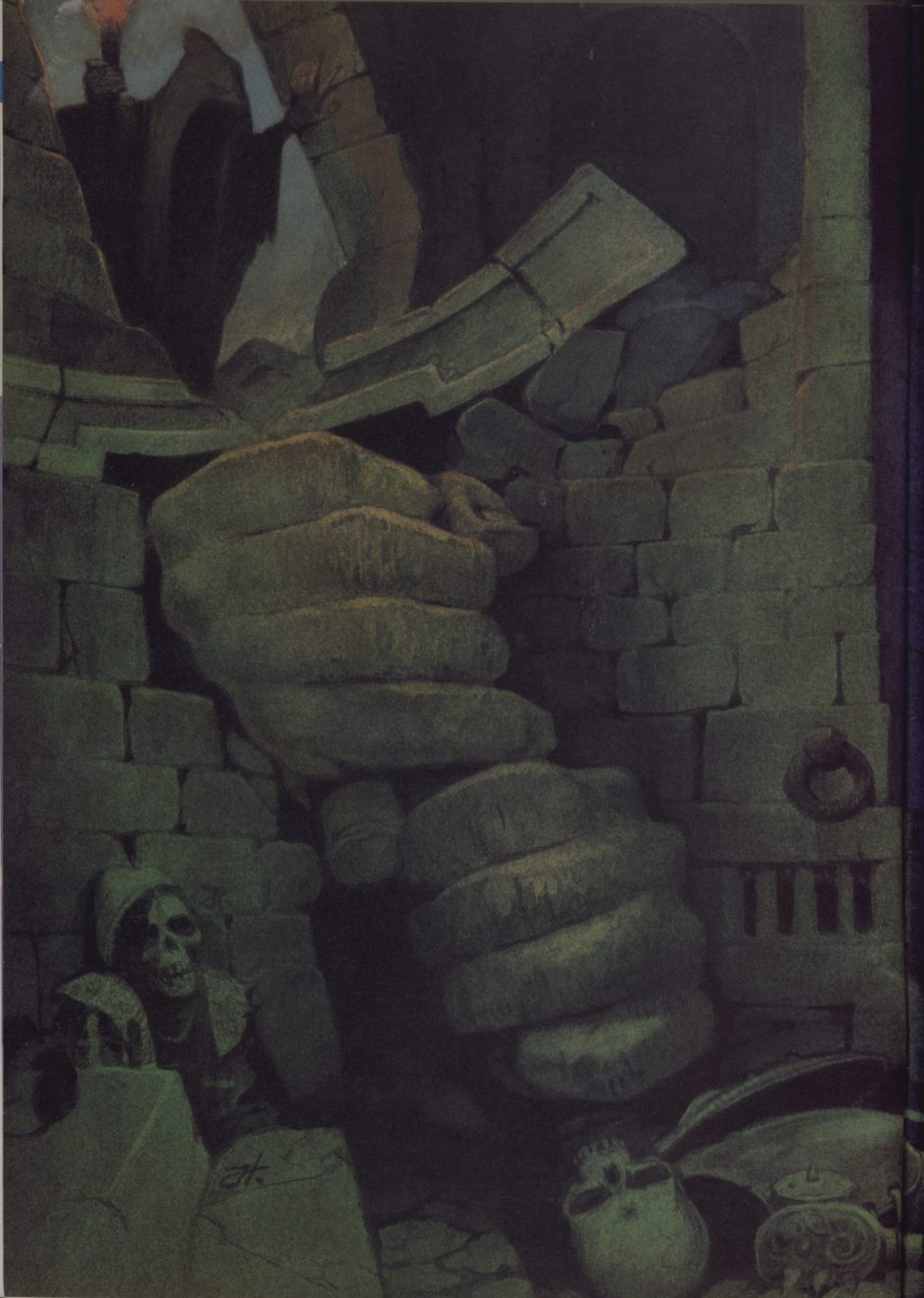
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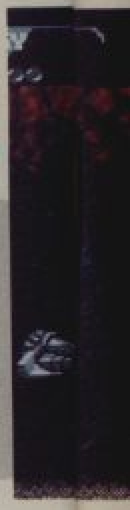




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Baby Bio



Just to add our four penn'orth to all this hands-across-the-water Channel-Tunnel-it'll-soon-be-1992 talk, here's news of an Anglo-French software pact between the Brits at Palace Software and Gallic Games, Delphine. Under the agreement Palace, are going to be distributing Delphine's games outside France.

The first of these is Bio Challenge, a six level, 16-bit arcade effort with extra weapons, end-of-level fatsos and heaps of robots and monsters to knock about. The programmer is the man behind ST and Amiga Space Harrier, and he has included loads of spiffy programmer's tricks, such as super smooth parallax scrolling (even on the ST!) and more colours on the screen than you previously thought possible. Who could possibly ask for more? Not us, that's for sure.

Tengen Team Trounced



Now you know we're not proud folk at C&VG, but once in a while even we feel the urge to blow our own trumpets a bit. And so it is that we present a photie of Messrs Rignall and Glancey in celebratory mode after beating Domark's crack Vindicators team to win the highly-prized Tengen Trophy. The contest was a close fought one, but our boys managed to pip Domark's Mark Strachan and Andy Blazdell, winning two out of three dual-player games on the tank-totalling coin-op. Certainly no quitters, the Domark lads are already drawing up their strategy for the rematch, which will be played soon on the next coin-op they're converting, APB. The only problem lies in finding an ABP machine, since butter-fingered delivery men dropped Domark's own machine from the back of their wagon, smashing it to veritable smithereens, as our pic shows!



123 GO!

The 123 Pack is Silverbird's new budget compilation of three past cheapos which is retailing for only £2.99. The featured titles are BMX Kidz, Rock 'N' Wrestle and Ninja Master, none of which could set the world on fire individually, but represent reasonable value in this bundled form. Impoverished C64, Spectrum and Amstrad owners should certainly be getting their money's worth, we reckon. But then we're funny like that, aren't we doctor?



Painting by Number

Zo. You want to be a painteur, eh. Eet will not be easy. You will need an Amigeur, an 'ole one Megabyte of RAM, and ze very latest Deluxe Paint III softwarez from Electronic Arts. 'ot on the heels of DeluxePaint I and II, Electronic Arts makes a quantum leap by endowing the third version of its powerful digital paint palette with full animation features. So now you can attempt to be Degas and Disney all rolled into one.

For those not familiar with DeluxePaint, it's about the most sophisticated paint package this side of a Quantel Paintbox — if you know what one of those is. You get a whole bundle of tools which allow you to . . . well, paint . . . anything you like, and DeluxePaint III makes it seem easy. Paint with any shaped brush you like in any colour you like, loads of wild fill patterns and likewize crazy effects. Mess about with perspective to your hearts desire.

Apart from the animation DIII has a few other enhancements, the details for technos — Extra Halfbright support for 64 colours, direct overscan painting, wrap and tint brush modes, improved airbrush, better font support and faster perspective. DPIII costs a mere £79.99. Trade in your Deluxe-Paint I for £55 or DPII for £35.





Green Gaming with Gilbert

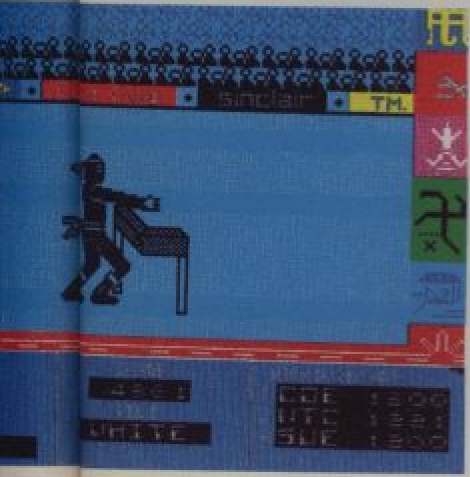
Get Fresh mucus king, Gilbert the alien, has at last been signed up for computer stardom. New boys, Enigma Variations are doing the programming and Again Again will be releasing it in April on Spectrum, C64, Amstrad, ST and Amiga.



Gilbert — Escape from Drill, as the game is called, takes the form of an arcade adventure in which the jocular snot bag has to scour the environs of an alien city for five vital parts of the Milenium Dustbin so that he can return to Earth and sign his new Get Fresh contract. Your only clues to the items' locations are provided when you complete four simple sub-games.

We've seen an early version and it all looks guite jolly, but for the definitive opinion, read the review next issue.





In Sex, In Space

No, no, no, no. It's INSECTS in Space! Which, in case you're interested (and you'd better be, matey), is the latest hot-blooded blaster from Sensible Software. The lads who produced such 64 classics as Wizball, Parallax and Microprose



Soccer have had their latest game signed up for the Rack-It label, so not only should it be great, it's going to be cheap (£2.99 actually).

As you would expect from a company which brands itself "sensible", the game design is completely loopy, but to quote co-programmer, Jovial Jops Hare, "it's like Stargate, but with extra weapons." Also featured are angels who save downwardly-mobile "babies of fun" and all manner of creepy-crawlies to unleash your destructive powers upon. The C64 version is out in May, with 16-bit conversions due in July and, quite frankly, some of us at C&VG just can't wait.

bers



Crazy Horse Compo

Audiogenic, purveyor of that fine footy game, Emlyn Hughes International Soccer, was so unutterably happy when it received a C&VG Hit award that it felt a competition coming on. The top prize on offer is an expenses-paid trip to the FA Cup Final at Wembley, in the company of two other winners from CU and Sinclair User. The three lucky hombrés will then have the chance to win an Amiga by predicting the score at the end of the match. 'Sorright, innit?

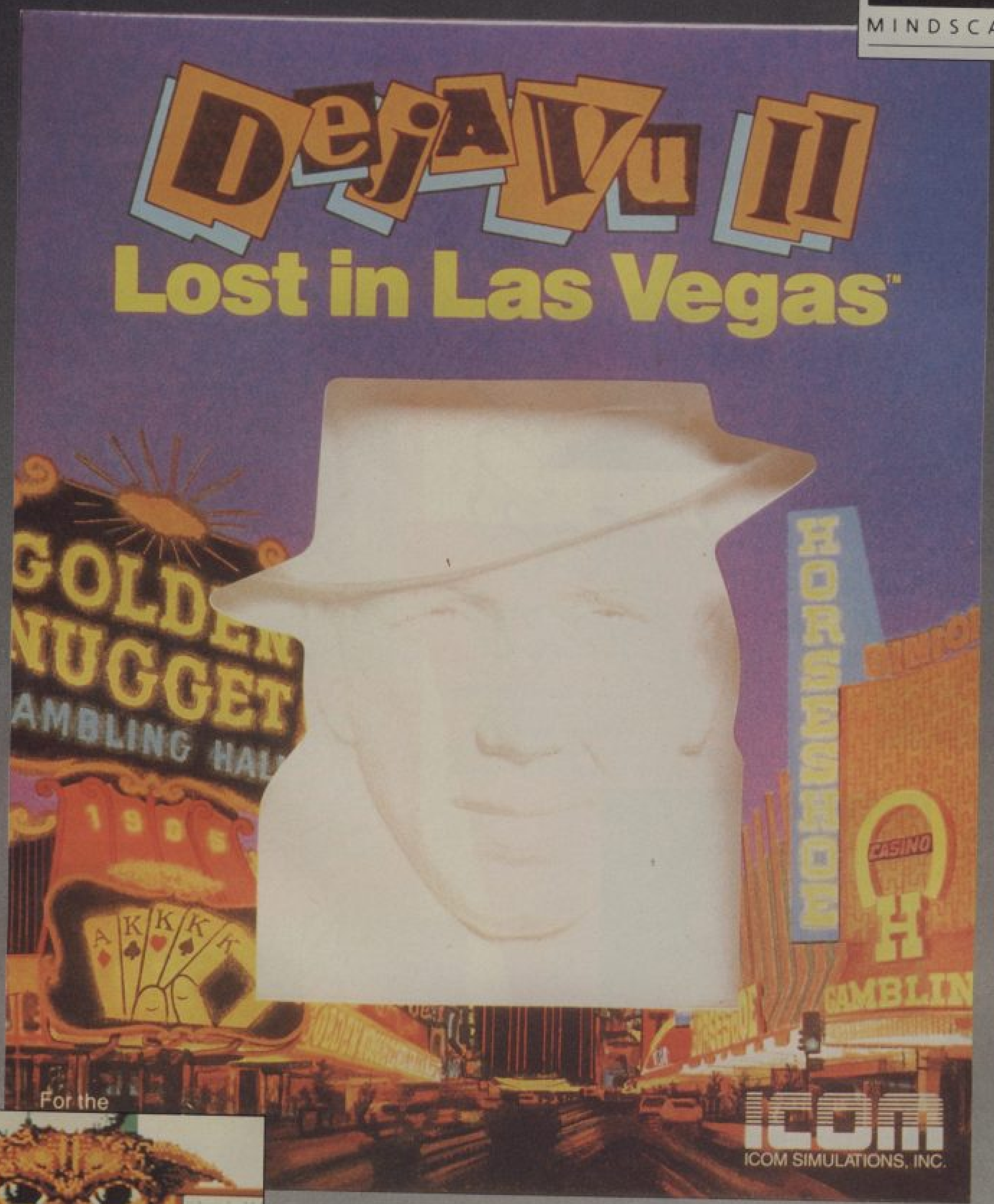
If you've lost your lucky horseshoes, don't despair, for there are also loads of runner-up prizes. Five second-prize winners will receive a signed copy of Emlyn Hughes' tome of whacky sporting anecdotes called "My Great Britons". The next ten names drawn out of the Ed's hat will nab an FA Cup programme signed by Crazy Horse himself, and a further 50 entrants get a nice big EHIS poster. So howdya like them apples?

All you have to do to put yourself among the lucky 66 is tell us which home computer manufacturer sponsors Chelsea FC. Reckon you know? Put the anwer on the back of a postcard or sealed-down envelope and whizz it of to CRAZY HORSE UUWAAAGH!, C&VG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU. Make it quick, so that we can contact the winners well before the big match on May 20th.



Play it again Sam

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It couldn't possibly get any worse than this – or could it?!

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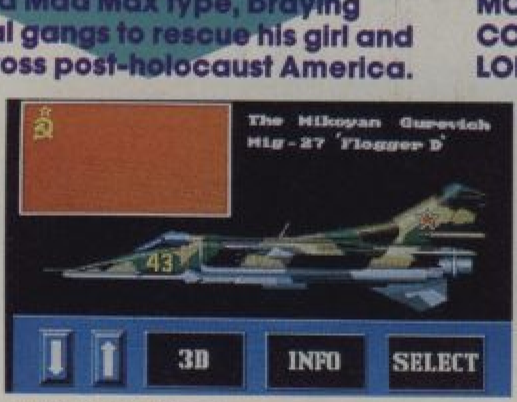


Freeway Frolics

Fans of Joe Dever's adventure gamebooks, listen up! In last month's AGM, Wayne was left reeling after reading/playing Slaughter Mountain Run, the latest in Dever'S Freeway Warrier series, which casts you as Cal Phoenix, a Mad Max type, braying homicidal gangs to rescue his girl and drive across post-holocaust America.

FAX has ten signed copies of this top-notch tome to give away to the first folks to write in telling us how many books there were in Joe's earlier Lone Wolf Series. Answers on a postcard or sealed envelope to SLAUGHTER MOUNTAIN RUN COMPO, C&VG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU.

Plotting Vektors



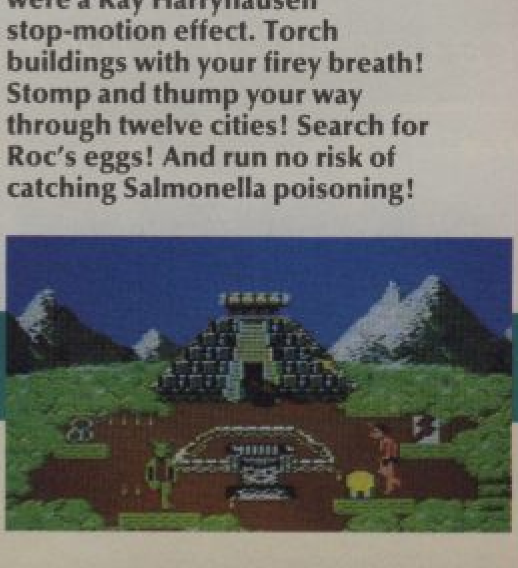


PHWEEEEE! KARUMMPHAAAAA!

With the successful 8-bit conversions of Star Wars and The Empire Strikes Back under their belts, Vektor Grafix is out to strengthen its name in 3D games with an airborne combat simulator, provisionally titled Bomber. Unlike, say, Falcon, the emphasis in Bomber, is very heavily on using up lots and lots of missiles and bombs to make lots and lots of holes in enemy aircraft and ground targets, and the flight simulation aspect takes a bit of a back seat. Of course, everything's displayed in fast, filled vector graphics which we were able to sample in an aircraft display demo. Suffice it to say that it was well impressive,and we're looking forward to seeing the finished product, which will be released soon on all major formats under the auspices of Activision. More news as and when....

Monster Mash

Due to hit the shelves in May are Spectrum and C64 versions of Melbourne House's AAARGH!, a game which panders to the fantasies of those who wish they were a Ray Harryhausen stop-motion effect. Torch buildings with your firey breath! Stomp and thump your way through twelve cities! Search for Roc's eggs! And run no risk of catching Salmonella poisoning!



Charts

ATARI ST TOP TEN

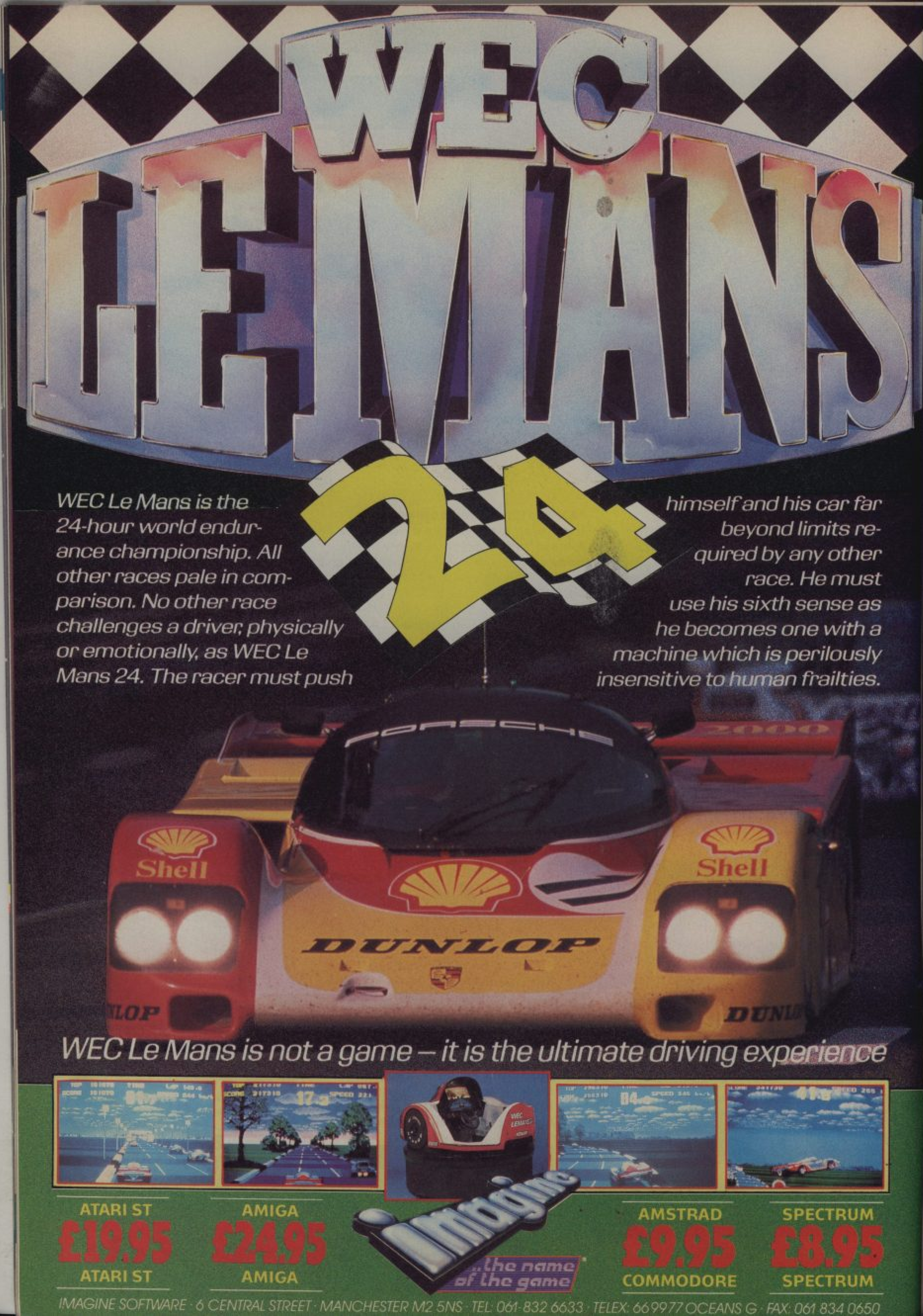
1	FALCON — Mirrorsoft
2	BARBARIAN 2 — Palace
3	DOUBLE DRAGON — Melbourne House
4	OPERATION WOLF — Ocean
5	BALLISTIX — Psyclapse
6	THUNDERBLADE — US Gold
7	LOMBARD RAC RALLY — Mandarin
8	ELITE — Firebird
9	FOFT — Gremlin
10	CRAZY CARS 2 — Titus

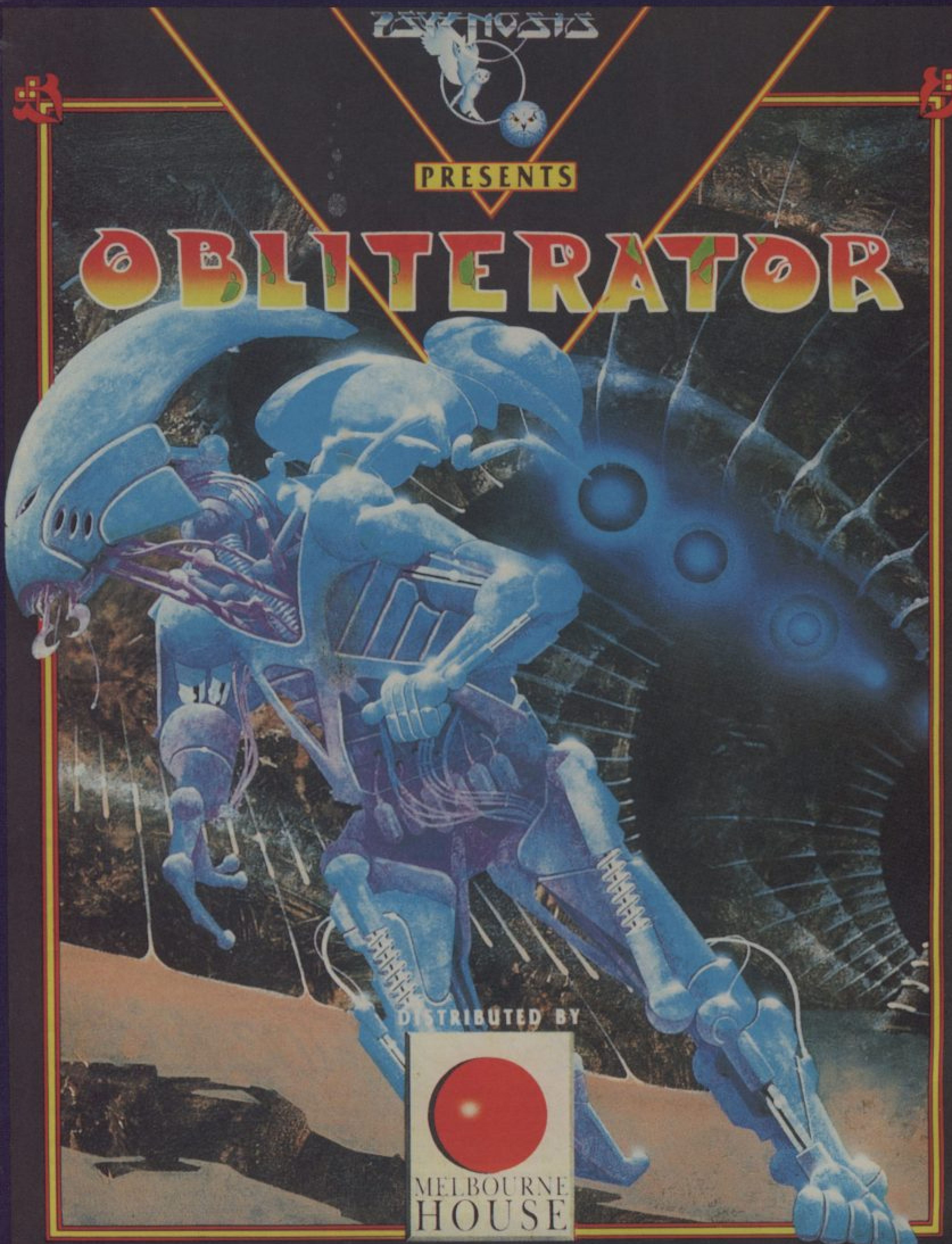
AMSTRAD TOP TEN

1	TREASURE ISLAND DIZZY — Code Masters
2	ROBOCOP — Ocean
3	TWIN TURBO V8 — Code Masters
4	JOE BLADE 2 — Players
5	GIANTS — US Gold
6	AFTERBURNER — Activision
7	DRAGON NINJA — Imagine
8	BIG FOOT — Code Masters
9	WEC LE MANS — Imagine
10	INTERNATIONAL RUGBY SIM — Code Masters

AMIGA TOP TEN

1	SUPER HANG ON — Electric Dreams
2	FALCON — Mirrorsoft
3	LOMBARD RAC RALLY — Mandarin
4	SWORD OF SODAN — Gainstar
5	TV SPORTS FOOTBALL — Mirrorsoft
6	BALLISTIX — Psyclapse
7	ELITE — Firebird
8	TRIAD — Mirrorsoft
9	GAUNTLET 2 US GOLD
10	JOAN OF ARC US Gold


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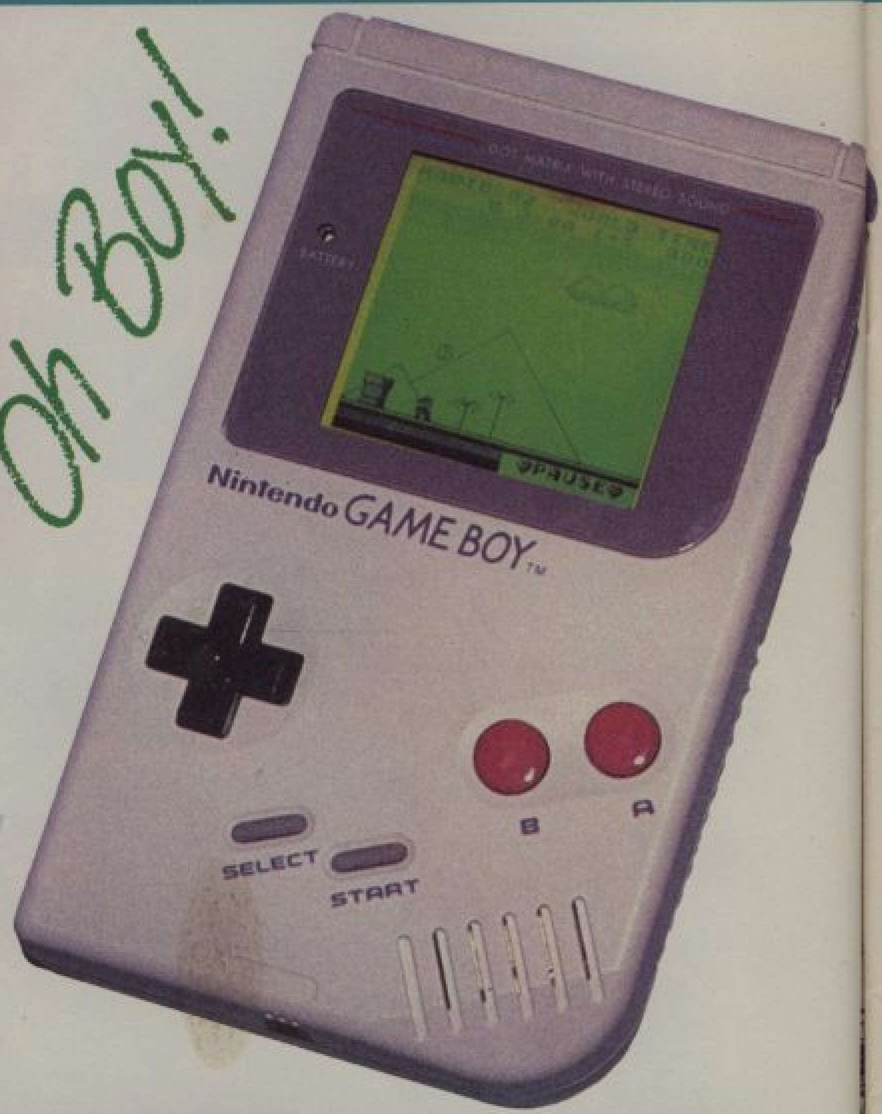


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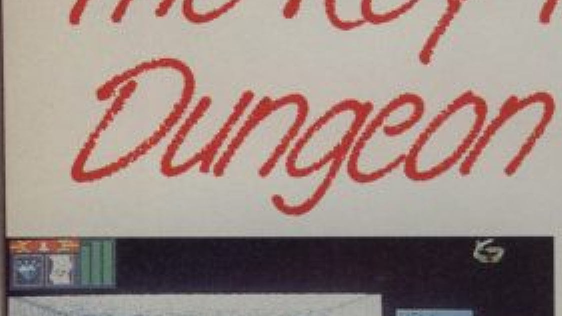
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Oh Boy!



The Key To The Dungeon



If Dungeon Mastery is still a mystery, the adventurer's club, Official Secrets, have just the thing for you, mister. They have produced a 24 page Dungeon Master Handbook, which contains monster descriptions, a complete spellbook, and maps and run-throughs of each of the twelve dungeons. It's a smartly produced document, but the text skips over certain details and is not without its anomalies. The maps are excellent, though, and would prove invaluable to anyone still trying to come to terms with traps and teleportation. The Handbook costs £1.50, but its availability is limited to members of Official Secrets or its half-price software sub-club, Special Reserve. If you're interested in joining up, contact OS and Special Reserve at PO BOX 847, HARLOW CM21 9PH. Send them an SAE and they will get back to you with subscription rates, etc.

What's that? Super Mario Brothers? On that tiny green screen? Well, actually, it's called Super MarioLand, and this is the Game Boy. Nintendo's latest techno-widget which recently hit the market in Japan. It's a proper hand-held console, into which you can plug games in cartridge form. That screen is a high-resolution dot-matrix screen of 144x160 pixels and to make it that bit more amazing. Game Boy has a headphone jack socket which provides the gamer with stereo sound! Heckymick! We hope to be taking a closer look at this micro-marvel in an imminent issue, along with the rest of the new generation of hand-helds. Keep those eyes peeled!

Press Release Of The Month



This highly-coveted award goes to Arcana for the spiffy red Mars Cops dossier which contained "authentic" hand-written notes, in-depth personnel files and IDs, all done up with a pink ribbon. How nice.

But all this is beside the point. The purpose of this lovely piece of documentation is to herald the much-delayed release of Mars Cops, which is to appear on the Amiga and ST at the start of May. After two years of programming, redesign and reprogramming, the crime-busting space epic is on final countdown. Protect the spaceways from piracy! Save the Earth from UFO attack! It's all in a solar day's work for the average bobby on the booster rocket. Have a look at this screenshot, and expect a review next issue.

Charts

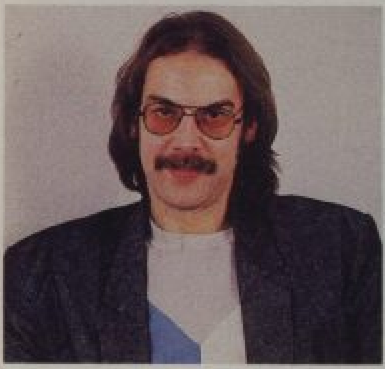
1	Operation Wolf – Ocean.
2	Robocop – Ocean.
3	After Burner – Activision.
4	Thunder Blade – US Gold.
5	Bomb Jack – Encore.
6	Ace 2 – Cascade.
7	D. Dragon – Melbourne House.
8	Joe Blade 2 – Players.
9	Batman – Ocean.
10	Commando – Encore.

1	Robocop – Ocean.
2	Afterburner – Activision.
3	Operation Wolf – Ocean.
4	Thunder Blade – US Gold.
5	F'mula Grand Prix – Alternative.
6	Ace 2 – Cascade.
7	Knightmare – Mastertronic.
8	Skooldaze – Alternative.
9	Through the Trap Door – Alt.
10	Back to Skool – Alt.

1	Robocop – Ocean.
2	Afterburner – Activision.
3	Microprose Socc. – M'prose.
4	D. Dragon – Mel. House.
5	Operation Wolf – Ocean.
6	Thunder Blade – US Gold.
7	Bomb Jack – Encore.
8	Pro Ski Sim. – C. Masters.
9	Ace 2 – Cascade.
10	Ace – Cascade.

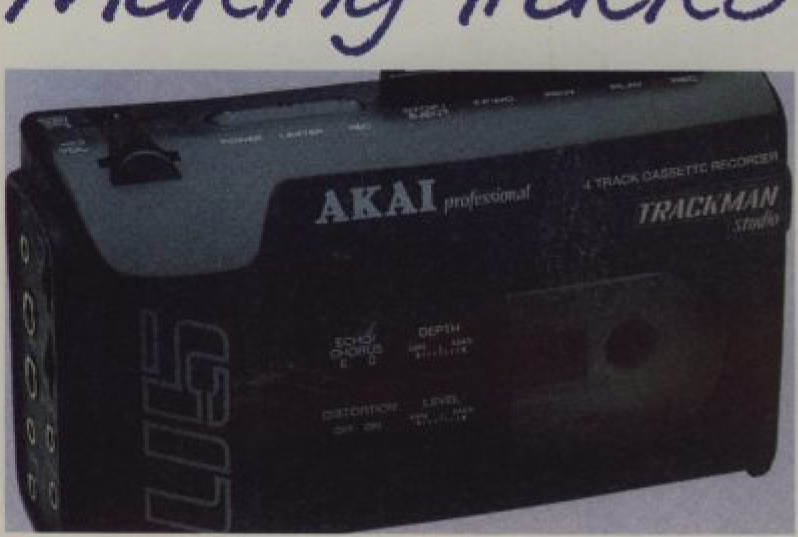


Rhythmic Rob Returns



Between our reviewing April's Game of the Month, Populous and Electronic Arts releasing it, one major improvement has been made. Master micro muso, Rob Hubbard took time off from his PC projects in California to produce a super-doops title track for Populous, featuring atmospheric Gregorian chants, for goodness' sake! So, knock up those sound and overall ratings, as this makes the heavenly game ever more deserving of your cash.

Making Tracks



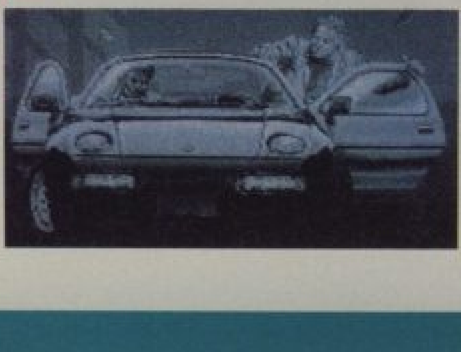
"What the . . .?" was the office reaction to this latest piece of Japanese miniaturised technology. It is the Akai U5 Professional, not just another Walkman, but also a tiny recording studio which lets the amateur muso lay down up to four tracks straight onto a standard cassette. The U5 has a small repertoire of effects which you can use to jazz up your sounds, such as echo, chorus and distortion, and it has numerous jack sockets to allow the connection of external effects boxes and mixing controls. Now that we've got all you budding Trevor Horns jumping up and down, we'd better tell you that the U5 isn't out in the UK as yet, having just been released in Japan at the equivalent of around £100. Our breath is held.

Ocean in Motion

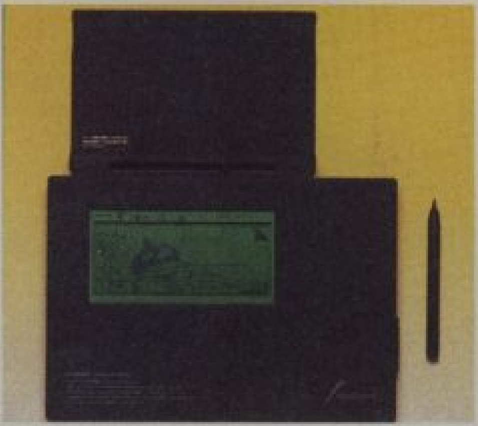
License masters, Ocean, have signed the contracts to three pretty hot conversions. Warmest of the lot is Red Heat, which puts you in the shoes of the Schwarzenegger-shaped Russian copper who stitched up drug rings in the recent action comedy film. The 16-bit screenshots we've seen make this arcade adventure look most impressive.

Roadbound crime-busters will be excited to hear that Ocean also have the license to convert Taito's fab cop car chase simulator, Chase HQ. In fact programming is already well underway on that title, and we should have some screenshots to show you pretty soon.

The ink is still wet on the final contract, which concerns horror merchant, Clive Barker's next film, Nightbreed. The film is based on Barker's novel, Cabal, and will feature more members of the undead than you can shake a crucifix at. Expect the game and the film around the end of the year.



Something of Note



Paper and pencils are for squares. This Japanese doobrie is the Canon A1 Note, a digital note pad with a high-res, touch-sensitive LCD screen. Using an electronic stylus you can scribble your thoughts or vent your artistic urges by drawing pictures and store the pages to memory using pull-down menus. Dozens of facilities are available at the prod of our pen, but before you get too excited, we should tell you that this is another of those items which is only available in Japan. Over there it retails for the equivalent of about £175, so for the moment you're probably better off with an incredibly low-tech WH Smith's exercise book, a Berol HB pencil and a Mars Plastic eraser. Such is the price of progress.



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C+VG REVIEWS

The Ratings

When a game is reviewed, we give ratings for five different criteria:

GRAPHICS
Does the game look good? Is the scrolling smooth? Are the sprites flickery? Is the animation realistic? This mark covers all visual aspects of the game.

SOUND
Sound and music that enhance a game are given high marks. The sound rating is low if the music or effects aren't appropriate or atmospheric.

VALUE
With this rating we take into consideration the price of the game, the amount of entertainment it offers, and the quality of the packaging and presentation. Basically, is it worth the price?

PLAYABILITY
This tells you how addictive and enjoyable the game is — the higher the rating, the more playable the game is.

OVERALL
The most important rating of all. This is what we think of the game as a whole, taking into consideration all the other ratings. In short, how good the game really is.

The Marks

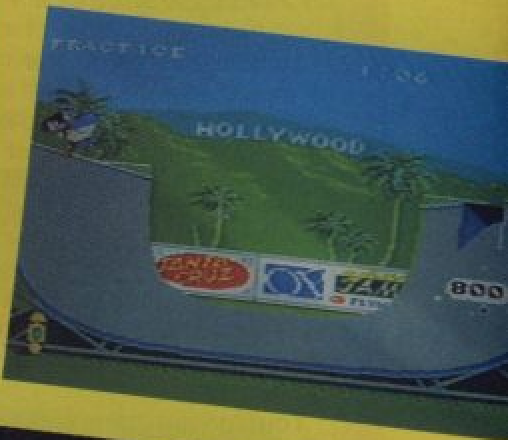
85+
A C+VG HIT! An outstanding game that shouldn't be missed.

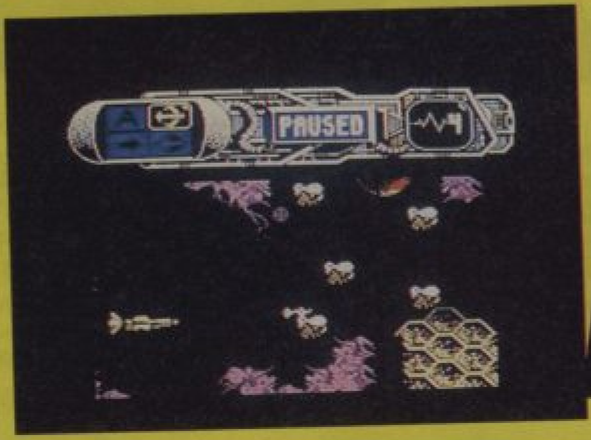
70-85
A very good game that missed out on a higher accolade due to minor discrepancies. Should definitely be tried, though.

40-70
Varies between just below average to fairly good. Could still appeal to fans of the genre.

10-30
Generally a poor game that mightn't even appeal to the most ardent fan.

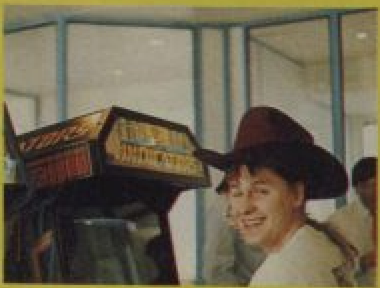
10–
Ugh! A ghastly travesty to buy for your worst enemy.







THE REST



JULIAN 'JAZ' RIGNALL
Practically lives in the arcades — and if he isn't on Brighton Pier, it's a safe bet that he's at home counting his hoard of computers and consoles. Shoot 'em ups are the love of his life — although he never says no to a good arcade adventure or beat 'em up.
FAVE GAMES: Dragon Spirit, Vindicators, Populous.

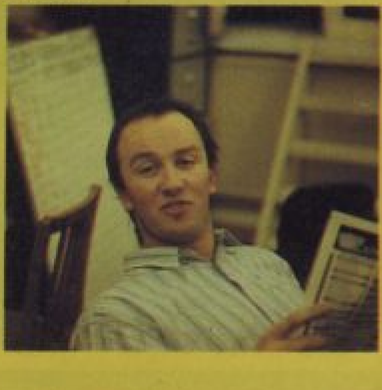
EUGENE 'EUGE' LACEY
Eugene has been in the software industry longer than he can remember, and certainly knows a good game when he sees one. He's a shoot 'em up fan, and is also partial to good arcade adventures and role playing games.
FAVE GAMES: Space Harrier (Amiga), Gradius, Strider (arcades).





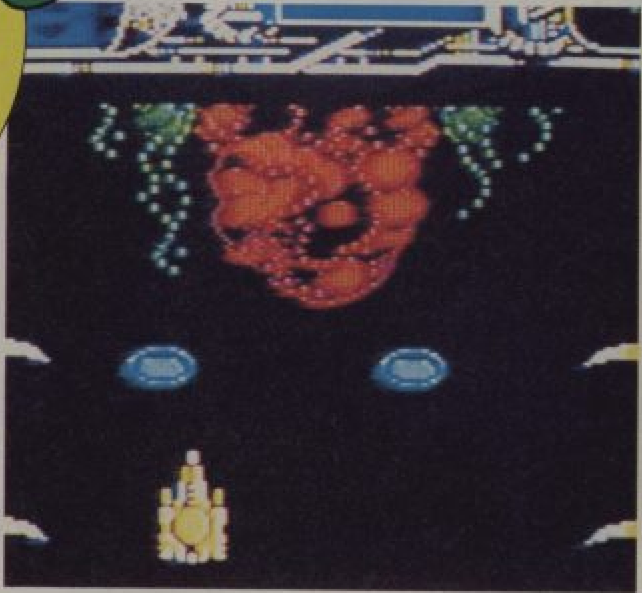
PAUL 'BAPS OOT' GLANCEY
Despite his diminutive size, Paul wields a mean joystick. He's primarily a thinking man, and loves arcade adventures and puzzle games. However, he's not adverse to the odd shoot 'em up . . .
FAVE GAMES: Sword of Sodan, Vigilante, Denarius.

'CORKY' CIARAN BRENNAN
When it comes to computer games Ciaran's not fussy — as long as it's enjoyable. He's an Amiga and ST owner, but also likes good 8-bit games.
FAVE GAMES: Hybris, Hostages, Cyberball.



Reviews





DOMI

▶ **SYSTEM 3**
▶ **SPEC/AMS/C64 CASSETTE £9.99, DISK £14.99. ST/AMIGA £19.99.**

Just when you thought the genre would collapse if another title was added to it, here's *Dominator*, the latest game in the "scrolling shoot 'em up with extra weapons" mould. So, what makes Dominator stand out from the crowd? Well, not a lot, but it does show that extra touch of polish which a lot of similar games lack.

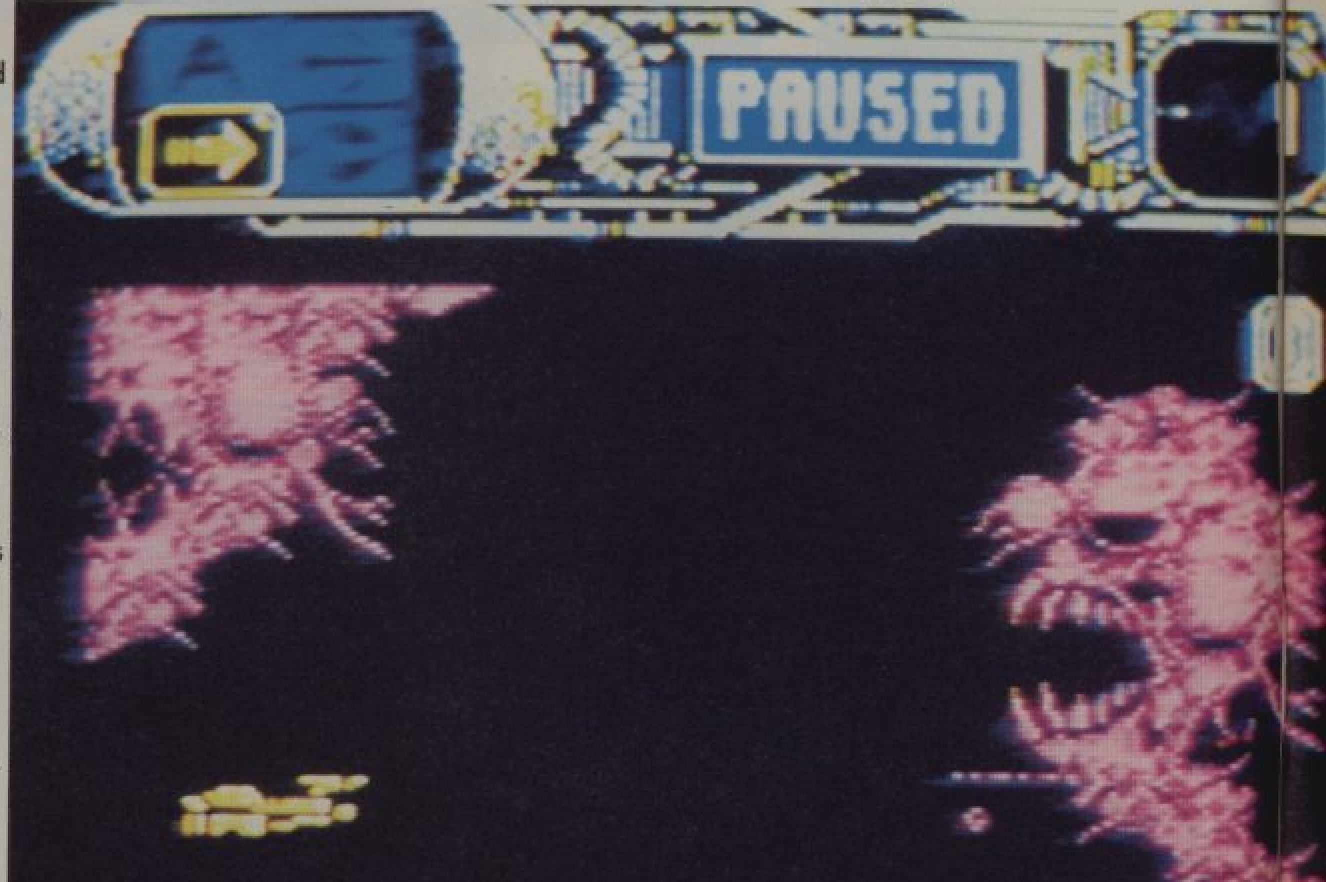
You start the game in the pilot's seat of a mothership, flying through a vertically-scrolling landscape of mushy, organic material which exudes tentacles in your direction. Luckily, your spaceship is a nippy old jalopy and the whole screen is available as dodging space, which is a bit of luck because there are a whole host of nasty beastlets roaming around the ether.

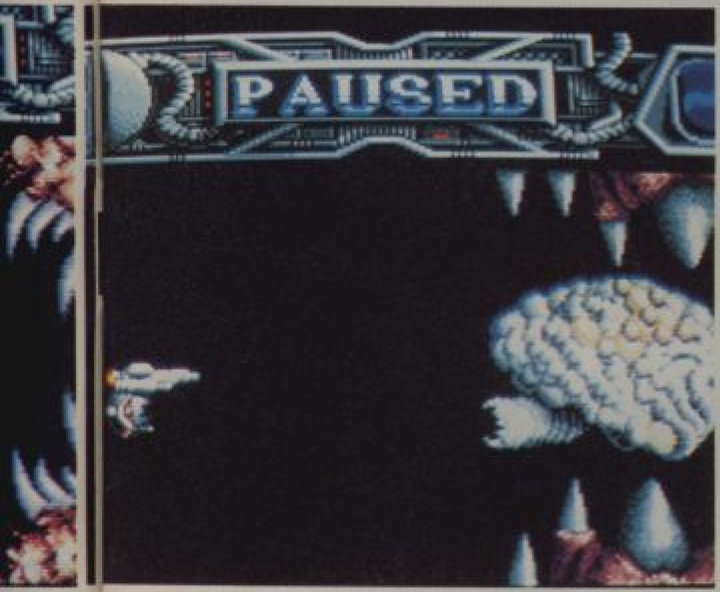
You won't be surprised to learn that your ship is equipped with a laser, which deals death in large quantities to any alien in your sights. There are no extra weapons to be found on the first level, because the programmers viewed it simply as a trigger finger warm-up exercise to prepare you for the main event. First, though, you have to deal with the end of level fatty, a superbly-drawn pulsating heart which has to be pumped full of photons before it explodes.

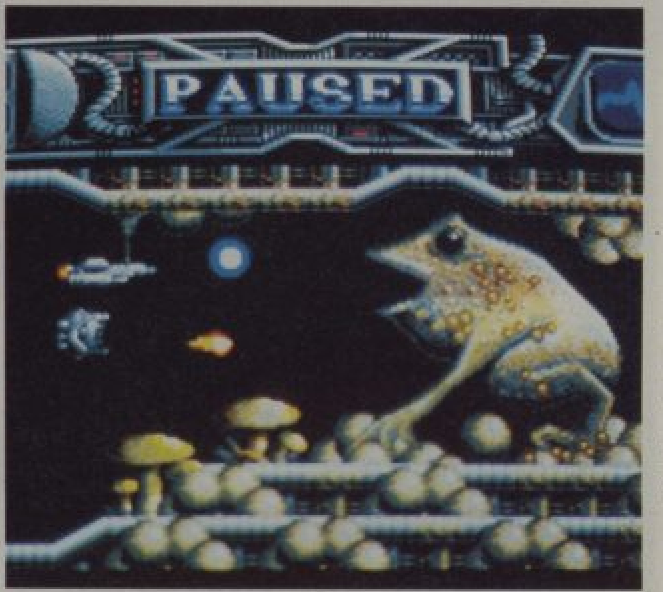
At this point you take control of your attack ship (which looks exactly the same as the mother ship for some reason), the action turns through 90 degrees and you start on the long, horizontally-scrolling journey through the innards of a stonking great space dragon.

Level two takes a similar form to level one in terms of background graphics. Large, wobbly pink blobs predomite, making the first half of the level look like a thousand melted mutants hanging together by their tendons. Blinking eyes and gaping maws also feature amonst the scenery, adding a further air of grotesqueness to the proceedings. Further on your surroundings gradually transform into a honeycomb, and the squirmy microbes which assail your ship are replaced by swarms of ferocious bees.

Shooting a whole group of aliens sometimes leaves behind a glowing B icon which, when shot, adds one of eight bonus features to your ship. Extra weapons include rear guns, which fire two shots backwards at an angle, a forward-firing laser cannon, a missile launcher (which comes in a remote pod in the Amiga version), a rapid autofire with a limited lifespan and a smart bomb. The Amiga version also features speed-ups. Bonus ships and points are also







NATOR

available. The weapon selection is automatic, the computer alternating firearms bonuses with smart bombs and extra points or lives.

The end of the level is marked by a mucus-dripping mouth which spits globules of acidic slime at your ship. A bit of dodging and blasting and that's the end of him. Cue next level.

Level three continues in an oral vein, featuring hundreds of nasty incisors blocking the route, and quite a few diseased cavities spitting out plaque bombs. As you continue through this level, the ulcerous mouth graphics give way to spiky, metallic claws and you have to fight your way through squadrons of spinning plates (haven't we seen those somewhere before?). The end of the level is inhabited by a large septic brain, which in turn is inhabited by a rather nasty maggot. Yeuch!

On level four, the transition from organic to mechanical is complete. The landscape is a metallic one with squadrons of robots flying around the place. The final confrontation, oddly enough, is with a large frog, with a sticky prehensile tongue which lashes out at your ship until you fry its brain with a few laster bolts.

At certain points in each level, the scrolling stops and you're faced with an intermediate monster, not as big as the end of level beasts but just as nasty. These take the form of giant bees, cyclops octopods and alien foetuses, which weave about the screen hurling missiles in your direction, until you can loose off enough lucky shots to kill them.

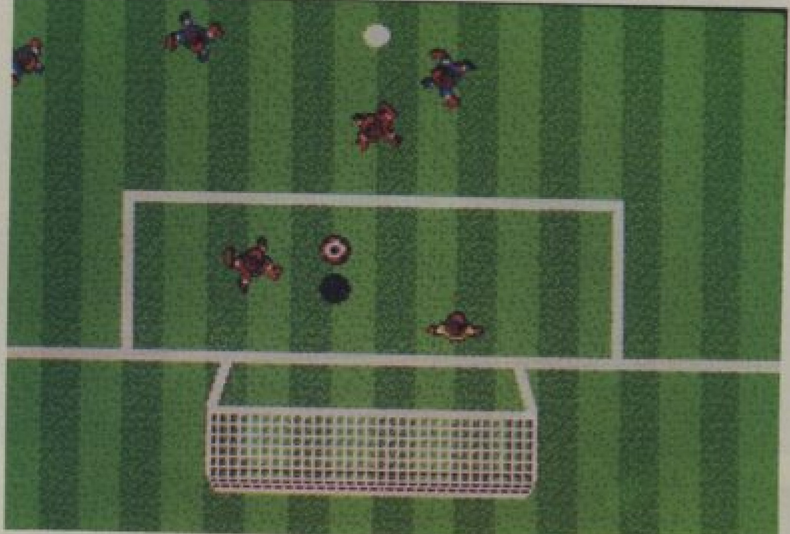
Now, if this sort of gameplay sounds a mite familiar to you,





REVIEW By MICROPROSE

✱ MACHINES: C64/SPEC/AMS/ST/IBM/ AMIGA
✱ SUPPLIER MICROPROSE
✱ PRICE: C64 £14.95 CASSETTE, £19.95 DISK SPEC £9.95 SPEC +3 £14.95, AMS £14.95 CASSETTE £19.95 DISK, ST £24.95 ✱ VERSION TESTED ATARI ST



MICROPROSE SOCCER

Microprose shocked everybody when they released Microprose Soccer for the C64. Not only had they produced a non-militaristic product, they had done it with such expertise that Microprose Soccer has become an instant classic on that format. Now, Microprose have released the sixteen-bit version. Just how do they compare with the original version? Read on . . .

The simulation provides both indoor and outdoor action with American rules six-a-side and standard eleven-a-side respectively. The time for each game can be varied between 2 and 12 minutes. Players may play against each other or one play against the computer. Selection of your team in the World Cup Competition is crucial, as it is in real life – it is much easier to win if you are a historically good footballing nation, such as Brazil than if you are Oman or Algeria. Conversely, if you get too good, you could try taking on the might of West Germany with yourself playing as Poland. Other control options allow for extremely varied games, with effects, such as, rain, thunder, overhead kicks and banana shots coming into play.

You are presented, on kick-off, with a look-down view – not a common one, but one that works well. On the 16-bit versions, you get no-holds barred, full screen, 8-way scrolling (so smooth!). Control your player nearest the ball with your joystick, using the firebutton to kick the ball in the direction your player is facing. The position of the joystick when kicking the ball determines the path that the ball takes, such as, high lobs, banana kicks and overhead kicks. Recapture possession of the ball with a sliding tackle (the wetter the pitch, the longer the slide!). Should the opposition get within shooting range, you gain control of your goalkeeper to prevent the inevitable shot from reaching the back of the net.

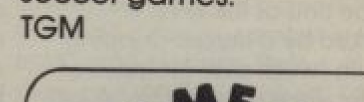
Throw-ins, corners and goal kicks all play their part in the game. Attention to detail is one of Microprose's hall marks and Microprose Soccer has not been left wanting in any respect. The colour of the players strips, strength of banana kicks and an action replay when a goal is scored are all excellent finishing touches to an already brilliant game. Overall, Microprose Soccer has to be the definitive football simulation – be there for the kick off!

C & VG Game of the Month – 95%
'Undoubtedly the best football game ever produced – miss it at your peril!'
C & VG

Zzap Sizzler – 90%
'One of the best soccer sims I've ever seen. Little touches like the rain on the pitch and banana shots really make it something special.'
Zzap

TGM Star Player – 89%
'Microprose Soccer is of the highest quality – its fast action makes it far more playable than other soccer games.'
TGM

GAME OF THE MONTH C+VG

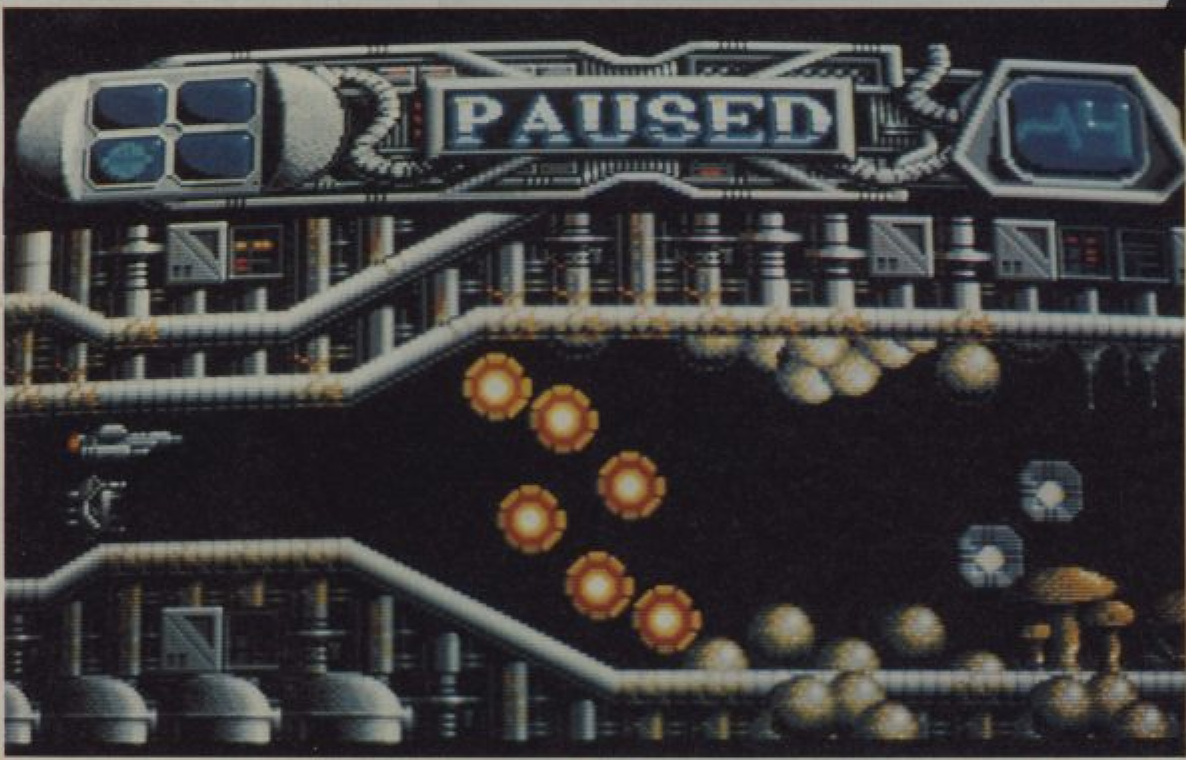


MICROPROSE SIMULATION ✱ SOFTWARE

"THIS IS NOT A C&VG REVIEW"

UNIT 1, HAMPTON ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, TETBURY, GLOS.

Reviews



DOMINATOR

your instints serve you well. With the likes of *Menace, Denaris, R-Type* and *Armalyte* on the market, *Dominator* certainly is going to have its work cut out trying to carve a niche for itself.

But, even without originality on its side, *Dominator* still manages to impress. The addictive qualities of the action are on a par with the titles I've mentioned above, and while four levels may not sound like a lot, there is a lot of heavy-duty blasting to be done before you reach the end.

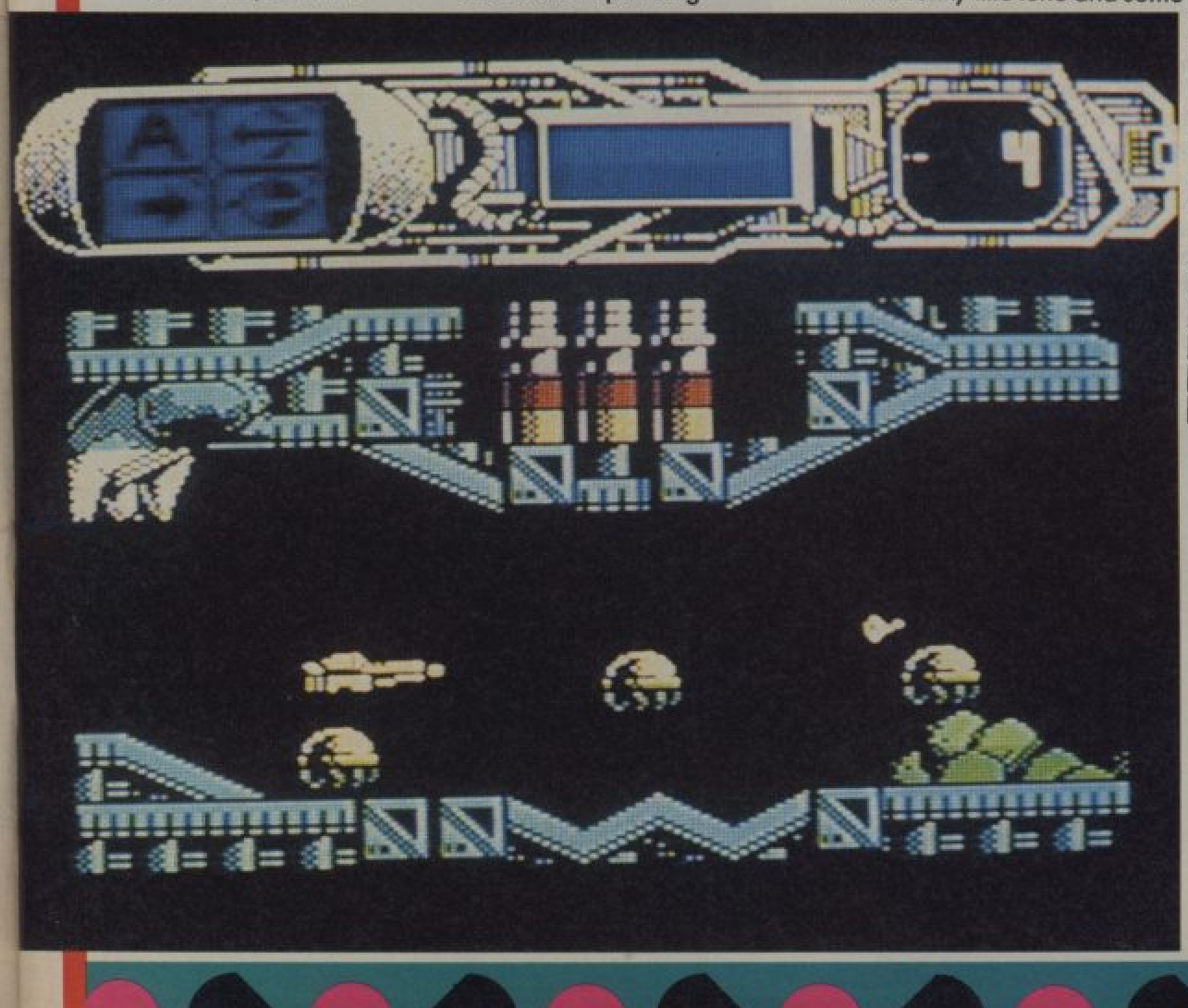
Graphically, *Dominator* is very good indeed, the sprites and backdrops being particularly impressive on the Spectrum version. The design of some of the uglier bits of scenery are distinctly reminiscent of certain recent horror films I've seen and blanched at.

The Amiga version's sound is a good as you could hope, with a funky title tune and some atmospheric in-game soundtracks. The programmers have included some strickingly good sampled sound effects, the best of which has to be the shrieking croak of the frog at the end of the fourth level, which increases in volume as you approach.

On the Spectrum at least, *Dominator* is one of the best shoot 'em ups around, probably the best I've seen since R-Type. The Amiga version is up against stiffer competition, but it holds its own with the likes of *Menace* and *Denaris.*

Whichever format you own, if you're a hardened shoot 'em up veteran, Dominator is a game to scour the shelves for.

PAUL GLANCEY



AMIGA

- GRAPHICS: 80%
- SOUND: 79%
- PLAYABILITY: 83%
- VALUE: 79%
- **OVERALL: 81%**

SPECTRUM

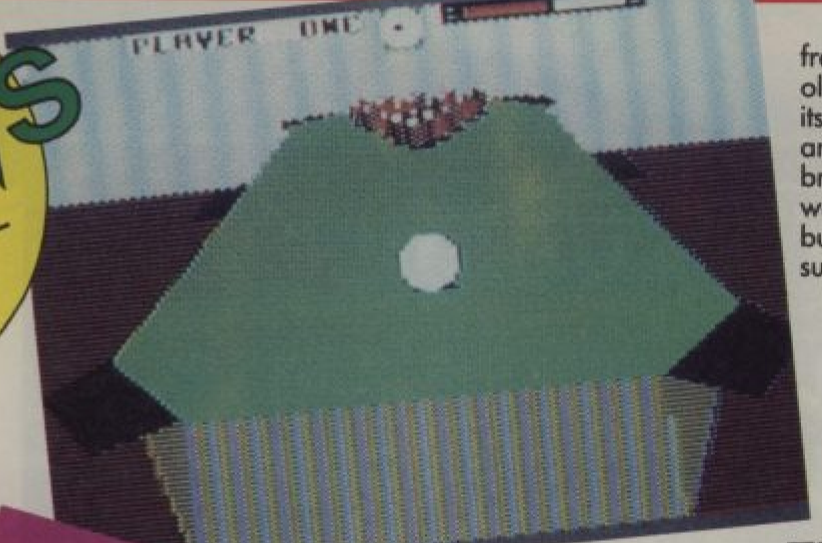
- GRAPHICS: 82%
- SOUND: 75%
- PLAYABILITY: 87%
- VALUE: 87%
- **OVERALL: 85%**

C+VG HIT!

UPDATE:

The C64 version has a whole host of famous names working on it: Hugh Riley and Dokk on graphics, Matt Gray on music and John Twiddy is providing some of the programming. So, that sounds promising. The Amiga team are producing the ST version, which should be pretty similar apart from one or two details and the lack of in-game music.

Reviews



3D POOL

- **FIREBIRD**
- **SPEC/MSX £7.99 CASS BBC/ELECTRON/AMS £8.99, C64 £9.99 CASS, C64 £12.99 DISK, AMS £14.99 DISK, ST/AMIGA/IBM/ ARCHIMEDES £19.99**

As the title suggests, *3D Pool* is a pool game played in 3D. Not the usual above-the-table stuff here — with Firebird's newest title you can view the table from any angle, which makes it the most realistic pool game yet released on home computers.

Options on the title screen let you choose joystick or keyboard options, and either one or two-player mode. In one-player, you take on five opponents of varying skill, ranging from very good to almost professional; the top level apparently being a binary version of European pool champion, 'Maltese Joe' Barbara.



Once you've chosen your options, the game proper begins. The player is asked to place the white ball and cue off. The strength of the shot and the angle of the cue can be changed before the ball is hit — aiming is simply a case of adjusting the angle of the table to suit the requirements of your shot, just like you'd walk around a real table to line up a shot!

The rules of pool are strictly adhered to, so it's just a case of potting your balls and sinking the black before your opponent does.

The computer players, as I've already said, are pretty competent but one annoying point about the C64 version is their thinking time. Just after a break, and when there are still plenty of balls on the table, the computer takes ages to think about and line up its shot, which I found frustrating, especially as I wanted to get on with the game.

If you lack patience, you might find this aggravating — even though the player does speed up as the balls are potted.



The graphics are plain and simple, but are perfectly suited to the game, and there's no confusion as to where the balls are — it's almost as if you were looking at a real table! The 3D movement is also swift, and lining up for a shot is very straightforward and painless.

3D Pool is innovative, unusual and very, very playable. If you don't mind the waits between goes (you could always play it with another human player), it's a definite 'must buy'.

The C64 version has a bonus freebie game in the form of the old BBC classic, *Zalaga*, which itself is a version of the old arcade game *Galaga*. It's a brilliant little shoot 'em up, and would have made excellent budget title — as a freebie it's superb!!

JULIAN RIGNALL

C64	
GRAPHICS	78%
SOUND	12%
VALUE	79%
PLAYABILITY	80%
OVERALL	**80%**

UPDATE

3D Pool is out on just about every format available. As the machines get more powerful, the game gets faster and better looking — the 16-bit versions look absolutely superb. Sounds like a winner to me, Bob.

Nigel Mansell ST & Amiga
£4.99

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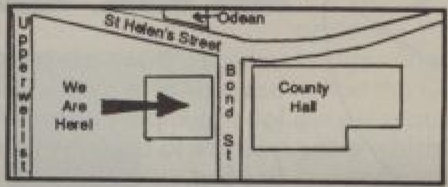
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Reviews

RUN THE GAU

▶ OCEAN
▶ SPEC £8.99 CASS, C64/AMS £9.99 CASS, ST £19.99, AMIGA £24.99

ITV's Run the Gauntlet is a brilliant TV programme — it pits four teams from the USA, Great Britain, Holland and Australia against one another over a variety of gruelling events which feature motocross scramblers, quads, speedboats, jet skis, hovercraft, Argo ATVs and off-road buggies amongst others.

With action like that, it's ideal subject matter for a computer game — and Ocean have capitalised with an official licence to produce a Run the Gauntlet program. The end result is a three-stage action sports simulation played over land and water.

At the start of a game the player(s) choose a team. After that the first event begins — on water.

A random water vehicle is chosen — speedboat, jet ski or hovercraft; each has its own handling and speed capabilities. The action is viewed from overhead, and the course scrolls as the craft move around. A map at the top right of the screen tells you where to go, and also gives a radar indication of where the opponents are. The objective is to complete three laps in the minimum possible time.

The player partakes in three rounds of three races. The time for each of the three races is added together to produce a result for one round, and points are awarded depending on whether you come first, second or third.

After three rounds, all points are displayed, and depending on whether you've done well enough, you go onto the next round — a land-based event which features the likes of buggies, eight-wheeled ATV's and bikes. Similar principles to the first event apply, with the player competing over a variety of courses with different vehicles. There are plenty of hazards to avoid, as well as a lot of bumping one another if you are to cross the finishing line first.

Finally, there's the Hill, a tough and demanding joystick-waggling event. The player controls a runner as he sprints up the vertically scrolling screen, leaping over



▲ All the fun of the TV programme.



▲ Power your way along.



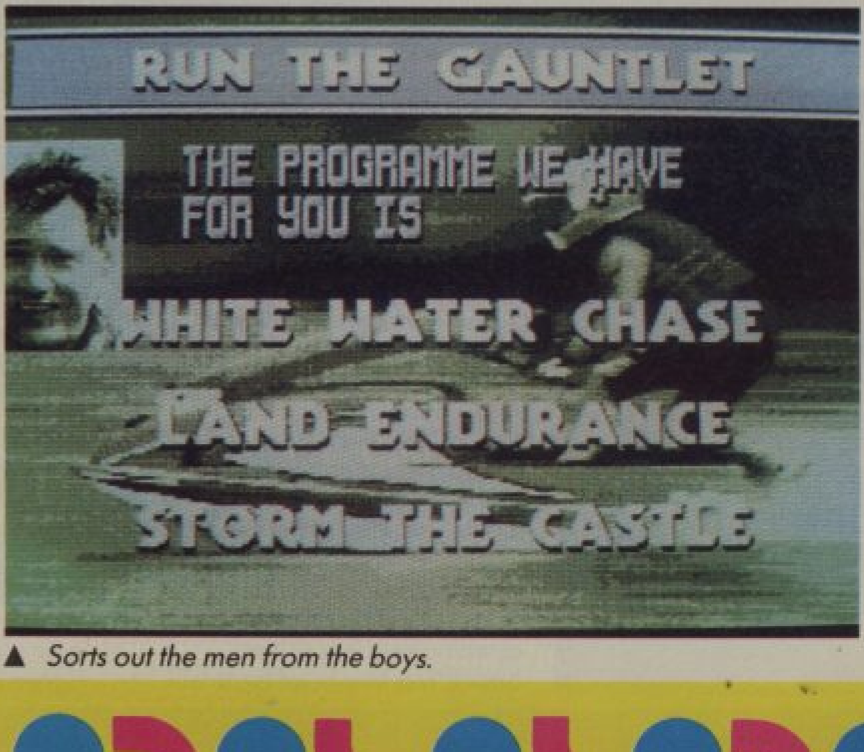
▲ Where's Martin Shaw?

UNLET



▲ *The graphics are outstanding.*





▲ *Sorts out the men from the boys.*

obstacles, running over log bridges and through water.

Run the Gauntlet is a simple, but enjoyable and addictive game which has a very competitive element in two or three-player mode. The random selection of courses and craft is another bonus, making the game unpredictable and increasing its lasting appeal.

The different style of controls is a great idea, and coming from the rather sluggish and slow hovercraft to a speedy and manoeuvrable jet ski takes some getting used to — mastering each craft is tricky, but perseverence reaps rewards.

The graphics on both 8 and 16-bit versions are polished and highly detailed, Both the ST and Amiga versions are colourful, with excellent sprites and backdrops.

Sound is also very good, with a variety of neat effects and ditties on 8-bit, and effective use of samples on the ST and Amiga to enhance the atmosphere of the game.

Ocean have certainly done a great job bringing Run the Gauntlet to our screens, and any sports sim fan after an action-packed game should definitely look this up.

JULIAN RIGNALL

SPECTRUM

▶ GRAPHICS	87%
▶ SOUND	76%
▶ VALUE	79%
▶ PLAYABILITY	86%
▶ **OVERALL**	**83%**

AMIGA

▶ GRAPHICS	88%
▶ SOUND	86%
▶ VALUE	74%
▶ PLAYABILITY	86%
▶ **OVERALL**	**82%**

UPDATE

All versions will be released at the same time, and will all play similarly. The only difference is the Spectrum version is a flick-screen game rather than a scrolling one.

Reviews

RUNNING MAN

▸ GRANDSLAM
▸ SPEC £8.95 CASS, £12.95 DISK, C64/AMS £9.95 CASS, £14.95 DISK, ST/AMIGA/ IMB £24.95

Running Man's introductory screens are some of the best I've seen on a computer. Digitised sequences from the film, sampled sounds and some stunning visual effects are used to give a superb movie-like opening sequence. However, from then on things go downhill alarmingly swiftly.

Before I continue, I'd better tell you a bit about the film on which the game is based. It's set in the future and stars Arnie Schwarzenegger as a policeman who's framed for murdering innocent civilians. His punishment is to appear on a prime time telly program called, obviously enough, The Running Man.

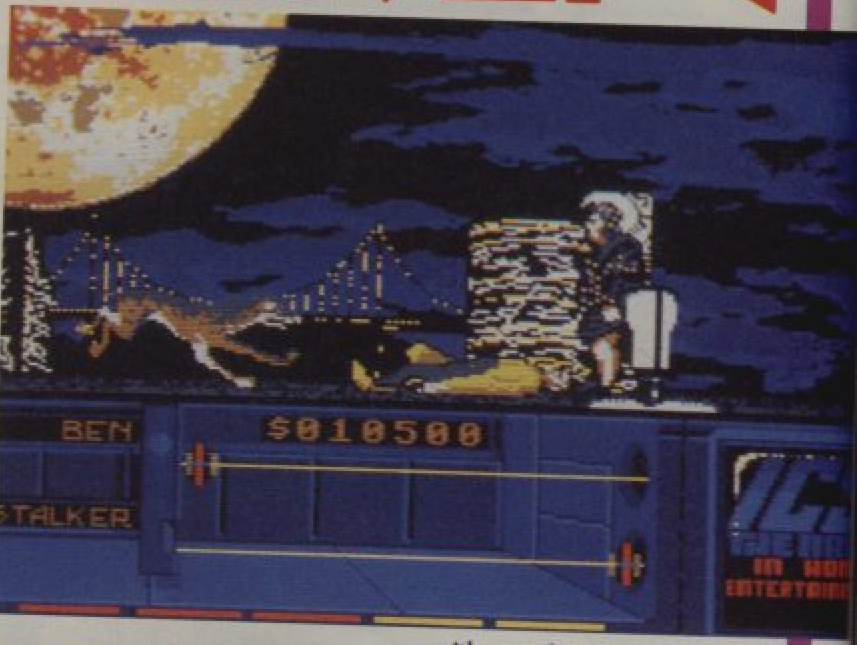
On this ultra-violent games show, contestants (or should that be victims) fight the show's five champions — massive, meaty mateys who wield a variety of whacky weapons, including a razor-sharp ice hockey stick and two large chain stores.

Of course, Arnie wins in the film. But this is a game, and with you at the controls anything can happen.

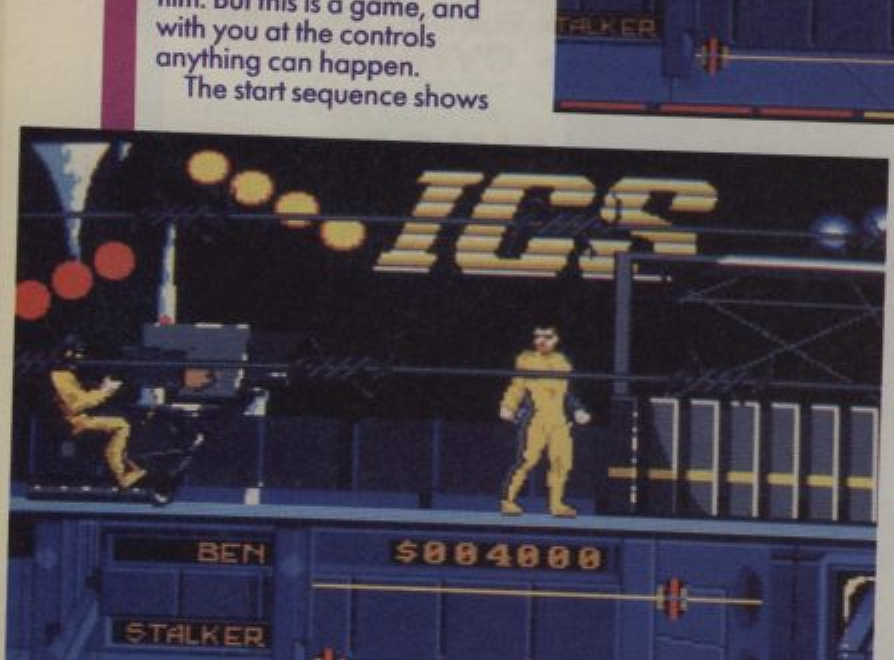
The start sequence shows Arnie being blasted down to the game arena, and then the action begins. *Running Man* is basically a scrolling beat 'em up, and the objective is to beat the five champions to win the game. First of all, muscle-bound Arnold runs along the landscape jumping over obstacles and kicking any dogs that get in his way. If a dog manages to bite the hero, a chunk is knocked off his energy bar — if the bar is entirely depleted the game ends.

Eventually the first opponent appears — Sub Zero, who wields a hockey stick. The object here is to simply wear down his energy bar (which appears beneath Arnie's) by repeatedly kicking him to the ground — meanwhile Sub Zero's trying to do the same to you.

If Arnie manages to beat Sub (which isn't too difficult), he runs to the end of the screen to finish the level. Between levels,







a neat little sub-game is played to replenish lost energy. The idea is simply to match a pair of randomly generated circles of symbols. Succeed and lost energy is replaced — failure results with no such addition.

The game continues with another three opponents of increasing difficulty, before Arnie confronts the studio guards and the final baddie, Killion. If he manages to beat him, he leaps into a handy waiting shuttle and escapes!

Like the film, I found *Running Man* a big disappointment — especially after the marvellous opening sequence. It's basically a five-level beat 'em up with very limited moves. The graphics are fairly good, but the parallax scrolling is juddery, and the actual playing screen is small.

A major niggle is the skill setting — the first two opponents are relatively easy, and then the difficulty is hoisted right up and the third one is very difficult to beat, resulting in frustration and annoyance.

Considering the potential of the film licence, it's a shame Grand Slam hasn't made more of this. As it stands, it's a barely average beat 'em up with a brilliant front end — which just isn't enough to warrant the hefty £25 price tag.

JULIAN RIGNALL

AMIGA

▸ GRAPHICS	72%
▸ SOUND	85%
▸ VALUE	39%
▸ PLAYABILITY	48%
▸ OVERALL	**47%**

UPDATE

The 8-bit versions will have similar play-mechanics to the Amiga version, but will lack the parallax scrolling and opening sequence.

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Reviews



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DRAGONSCAPE

Dragonscape is a multi-scroll shoot 'em up featuring, naturally enough, a dragon, your good self — (sitting on the dragon's back) and a whole troop of spooky looking things after your blood.

The 'story so far' guff is a cut above your average dragon drivel, or is it? Judge for yourself. While reading your favourite magazine on the bus (no need to ask which one) there is a loud bang and you find yourself in the magical land of Tuvania. For a long time, and until recently, Tuvania was a really nice place. All was kept in order by 40 magical artefacts. But the artefacts have been messed about with by the evil King of Kaos (somewhere in Greece), so you have been summoned to put them all back where they belong.



The player gets an aerial view of the proceedings through a smallish square window in the middle of the screen. To the right, an elongated dragon becomes skeletal from the tail upwards as your energy depletes. A little box at the bottom shows the object currently in your possession and as it's empty you'd better go and look for one.

Trouble is, before you can get Garval to take a step in the right direction, or any direction for that matter, you are encircled by a vicious group of stars, yes stars. These are just the first in a long list of weirdo monster things that beset you on your quest for the artefacts. Fortunately, Garval is a fire breathing model and a quick burst on the button turns them into so much charcoal.

I could try and describe a few of these monster things, but suffice it to say there are loads of 'em and very good they are too. Sometimes they just appear at randon; like the snakes, stars and birdies, sometimes passing over one of the artitacts sets them in pursuit. Some are pretty ineffectual, others, like the cherub-devils, are virtually instant death on contact.

This is where the big big moan comes in, 'cos you can only breathe fire in the direction Garval's gob happens to be facing, and you can only move in the direction you're facing; turning to fire tends to send you flying straight into the peril. It's a bit disconcerting at first, but you soon get used to it. The thing to do is run away, then turn and let 'em have it on your way back in.

On the plus side there's a lot to outweigh the joystick drawback. The graphics are good and imaginative, better than anything I've seen from Software Horizons before. The backdrop has some nice detail — Little pagodas, bridges, villages and the like and the scrolling is noticably smooth. Shame about the small size of the scroll window though. Lastly, Dragonscape has a fair bit to it. There are eight artefacts to collect and place in their proper place on ech of the five levels. What's more, each level comprises 40 screens.

So, all in all, it should keep you occupied for a lot longer than it takes to make a cup of coffee.

ST	
► GRAPHICS	70%
► SOUND	40%
► VALUE	60%
► PLAYABILITY	70%
► **OVERALL**	**65%**

UPDATE

The Amiga Version, out by the time you read this, will feature a much bigger play area, making Dragonscape well worth a look.



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Reviews

C+VG HIT!

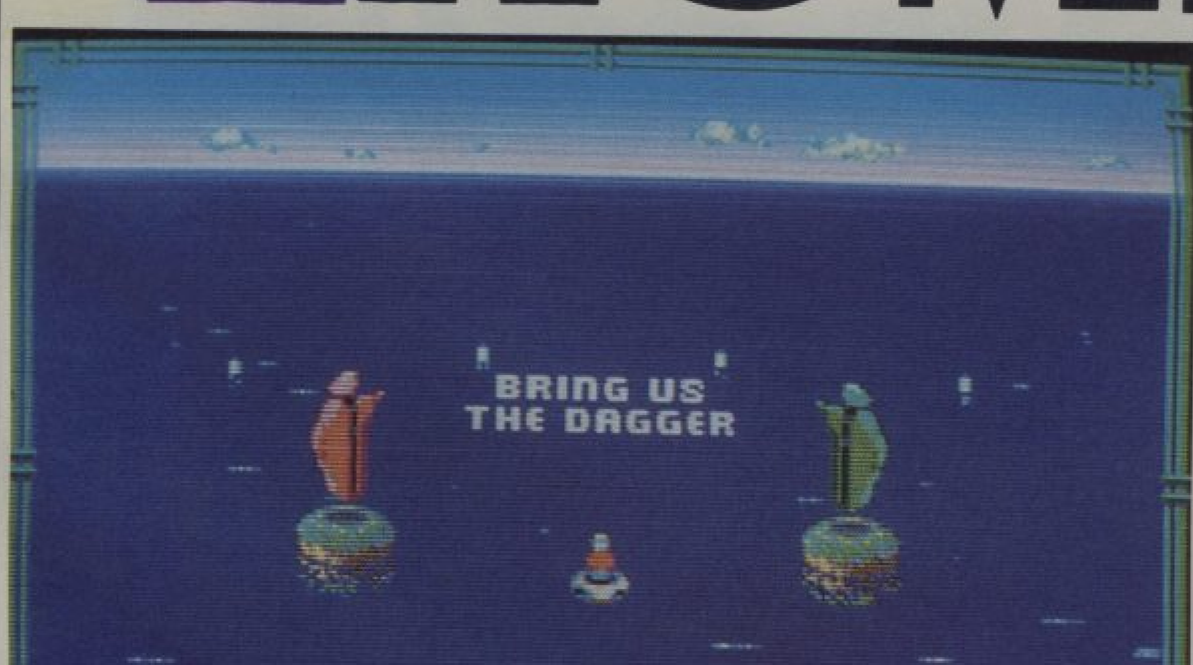
► DOMARK/ BRODERBUND
► ST/AMIGA £19.99

"Flight 396 . . . Fsszzz . . . Heading for the ocean . . . Zweeee . . . Planet Aguar . . . Nyeeeeaaiee . . . Omega Sector . . . Shweeeek . . ." The last words from a doomed intergalactic passenger transporter, which yielded only one survivor — a little boy. Before he could be rescued, the infant was found by some benevolent sea-sprites who found his dimples irresistible, so they adopted him as an honorary sea-sprite, keeping him safe and jealously guarding him from human would-be rescuers in an impenetrable observatory dome.

That's where Typhoon Thompson comes in. To call him a willing hero would be a bit strong. His sinuses clog at



TYPHOON THOMPSO



the merest smell of danger and he has a very low pain threshold. But having just been kicked out of the Galactic Rescue mothership into a one-man jet-sled, he's not really in a position to complain about his new role in life.

Not terribly keen to get on with his dangerous mission, Typhoon spends a few minutes finding out what his jet-sled can do. The mouse moves the sled forwards or backwards and banks it left and right. Holding down the left button activates the thrusters which shoot the sled across the ocean at a fair lick. The sled is equipped with a laser cannon which releases hot blobs of photons whenever the right button is pressed.

It's not long before Typh comes across the Home Islands, home of Spirit Guardians who help him on his quest. They provide extra lives, extra jet-sleds, even extra weapons, AND, if Typhoon can find certain magic artifacts they help him get inside the





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SON

observatory dome. Now, the problem is these items are held by colonies of sea-sprites who won't give them up without a fight. But that's what your laser cannon's for, isn't it?

Each colony is made up of a small ring of islets, surrounding a treasury islet where the artifact is kept. As you approach, sea-sprites take to the air in Flyers, seeking retribution for your intrusion either by zapping Typhoon or smashing his jet-sled (or both!)

If Typhoon can blast the Flyers the sea-sprite occupants are thrown into the water and start swimming for their island. Quickly, Typhoon has to swoop down towards them, pluck them from the water and stuff them in a sack.

Once he's captured every sea-sprite, Typhoon can take them to the treasury island and hold them to ransom. The treasurer sprite has no option but to hand over the artifact in return for his kidnapped comrades, and once Typh has it in his sack, he can return to the Home Islands and hand it over to the Spirit Guardians, to receive an extra life and his next mission.

At the end of the fourth mission, Typhoon will have all the artifacts the Spirit Guardians need, allowing him, in a last desparate battle, to rescue the sea child and save the day, good, eh?

Actually, "good" is a very inadequate term for describing this game. Typhoon Thompson is . . . well let me just say this . . .

Graphically the game is astounding. The action is displayed in thoroughly convincing 3D, — a plus point in itself, but on top of that there are a whole host of design touches which put Typhoon Thompson head and shoulders above other games. You've heard the term "cartoon-quality graphics"? It's been used many times but this is the first game that really lives up to the promise.

The game opens as Typhoon is kicked out of a flying saucer, a scene which is displayed in one of three superbly comic ways. The best shows him hanging onto a gantry until a ship's officer comes out and stamps on his fingers! Brilliant! But that's not all . . .

The programmer at Broderbund Dan Govlin (he produced Choplifter — remember that?) has put hours of work into animating every little sprite to such a degree that they seem to have a life of their own. The treasury sea-sprite's reaction when Typhoon presents him with a sackful of his mates is a joy to behold. And when he toe-punts the sack into the treasury . . . Amazing! There's even an afterblur effect to make the movement seem more fluid. Sound too is beautifully orchestrated. Not only is the music good, the sound effects are very cartoony and are perfectly synchronised to the action.

You might think that with such brilliant graphics, the programmers have let gameplay take a back seat, and to some extent it would be true. Typhoon Thompson isn't a complex game to play, and there are only four missions, but it's adequate entertainment because those graphics make it such fun that you keep coming back for more.

So, what was I saying? Oh, yes. Typhoon Thompson is one of the best games I've seen recently on the ST. Beg, borrow or steal a copy, now!

PAUL GLANCEY

ST

▶ GRAPHICS:	96%
▶ SOUND:	87%
▶ PLAYABILITY:	88%
▶ VALUE:	90%
▶ **OVERALL:**	**89%**

UPDATE

No immediate plans for any other versions, but Typhoon Thompson would seem a likely candidate for an Amiga conversion at least.

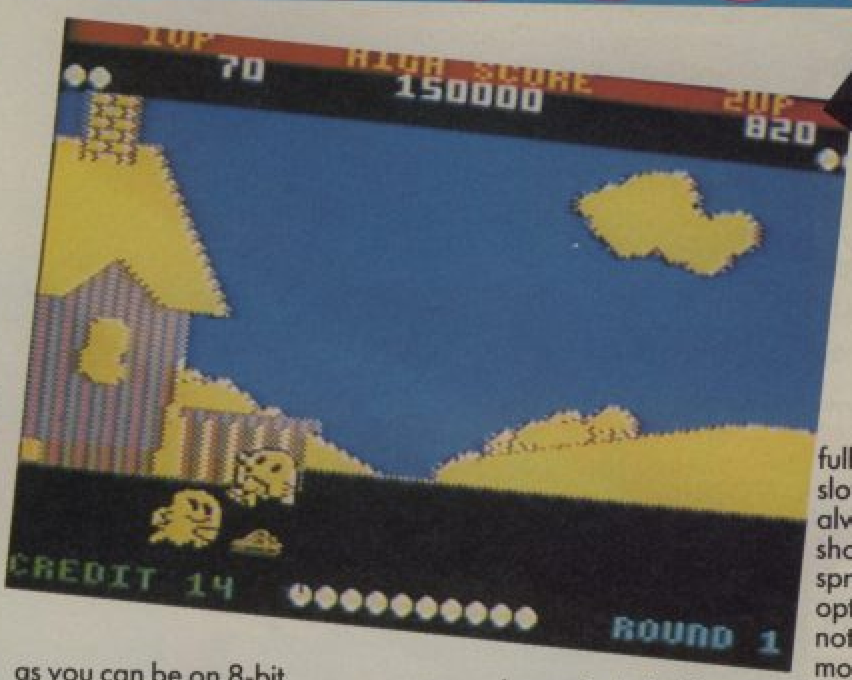




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PACLAND

► GRANDLSLAM ENTERTAINMENTS
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Pac-Man is possibly the world's most durable computer game character. Of late he's enjoyed something of a rebirth as Namco have developed a few new game concepts around the basic idea: Pac-Man eats powerpills and fruit to keep him going and bump up his score. If Pac-Man eats a BIG pill, then the ghosts run away 'cos they know he can now eat THEM! But after a while the BIG pill wears off and they can chase him again. It is a brilliant game design, always was, and it's odd how even today it can still be given new life by a few inspired Japanese game designers.

In Pac-Land, the scenario is viewed from the side, and a little Pac-Man in a hat runs through Pac-Land whilst being pursued by ghosts, only this time the ghosts have got little cartoon cars and planes and can bomb him with smaller ghosts . . . It's weird but you get the idea.

So that's the Namco design, what about the Grandslam conversion? Well it's as faithful as you can be on 8-bit computers, really. The game design is so simple it would take a complete aardvark to program it wrong, and so even the Spectrum version I looked at was playable and addictive, in the way that all simple and cheerful games are.

The graphics are monochromatic in the Speccy version, naturally, but not bad for that. Well drawn and although not animated in a lot of frames, the animation is appropriate and smooth with it. Obviously when the screen is full of sprites, the program slows down, but then again I always said the Spectrum should have had hardware sprites like the 64. It's been optimised so that it's not too noticable though, so even at its most juddery it doesn't get you into trouble with the enemy ghosts.

Easy to play? You can do it with one hand. Easy to beat? Think again. It looks easy but the timing is critical, and you have to know what's ahead. On the whole I thought it an above average conversion on the Spectrum and one I'd come back to again.

PHIL SOUTH



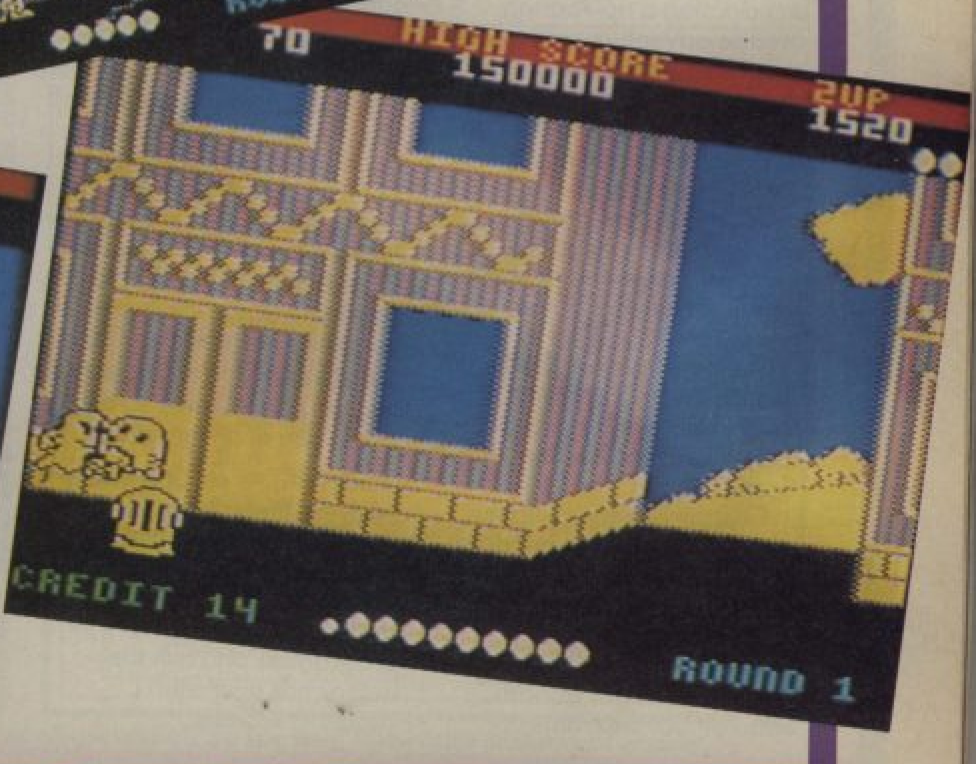
SPECTRUM

► GRAPHICS	80%
► SOUND	20%
► VALUE	75%
► PLAYABILITY	75%
► **OVERALL**	**57%**

UPDATE

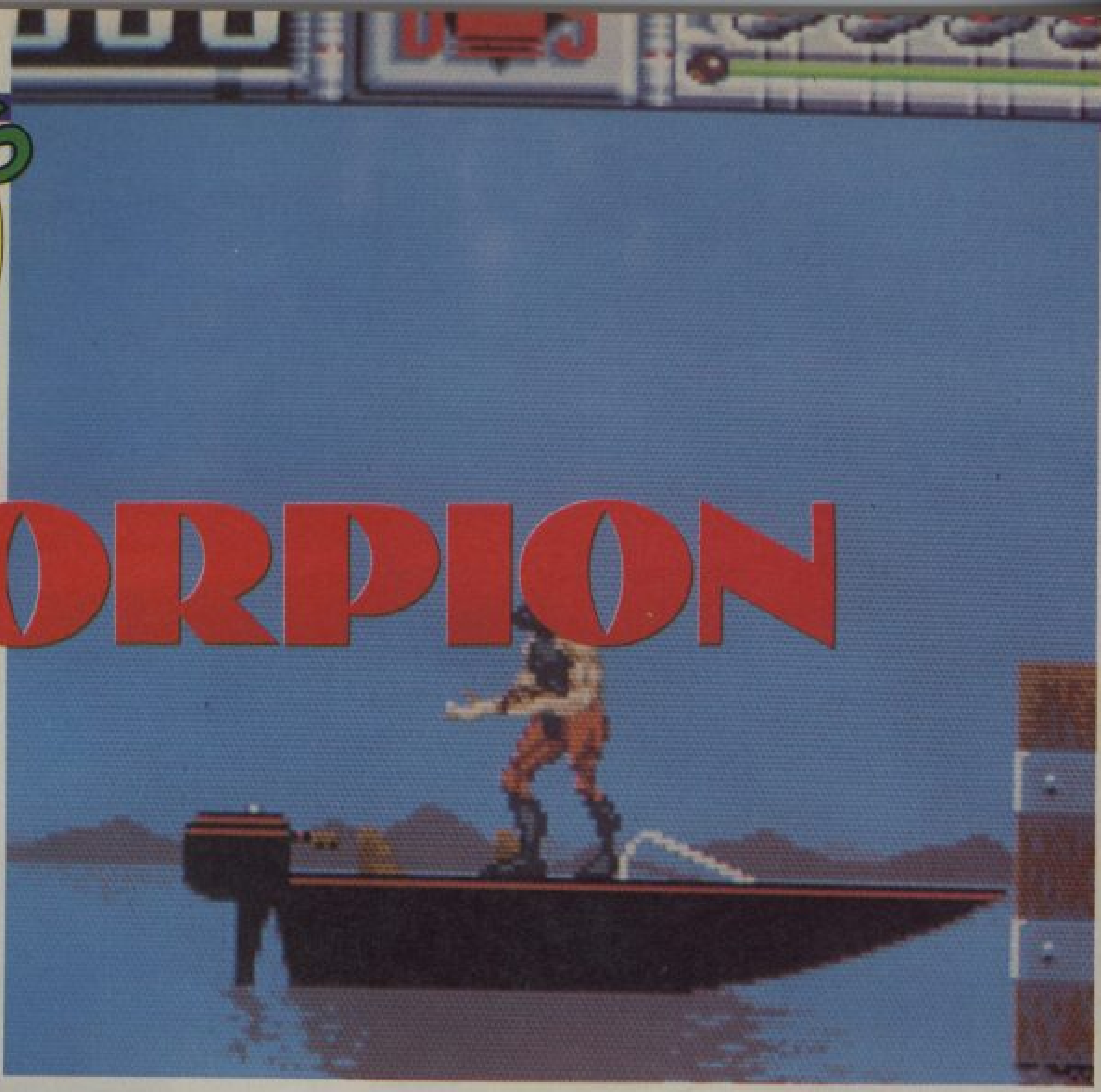
C64 version has been out for a while. The ST version looks good, but the scrolling is wobbly — the Amiga version has better scrolling.





Reviews

SCORPION



▶ DIGITAL MAGIC SOFTWARE
▶ AMIGA £24.95

You know I really feel like a Scorpion Warrior right now . . . tromping through endlessly changing landscapes, fighting my way through hordes of miscast alien extras from other games/films/TV shows, with only the little wiggly lines bursting from my fingertips for protection. *Sigh*. Yes folks, it's a platform based shoot 'em up dressed up as lamb.



The promise of the screenshots on the box had me anticipating a rip-roaring arcade adventure with quality graphics and animation, ear-shattering sound and gameplay to keep me coming back for more. But no, instead we have a dose of undoubtedly fine graphics, but stiff animation and a host of irritating design flaws which impair enjoyment of the gameplay.

The game covers five levels, The Harbour, The Forest, Stay Cool (a Snowy Landscape in fact), The Crypt, and finally the Castle.

Graphically speaking the game is nice, with a hundred different aliens and five scrolling backgrounds. But the animation lacks a certain fluidity — the scrolling backgrounds are smooth enough, but the frames of animation for the main sprite and for his enemies are stiff and lifeless. A bit like being menaced by cardboard cut-outs.

Jumping from a platform higher than his height, our hero lands as if he's just stepped off a kerb. I think it might have been better to err on the side of too much reaction to things rather than too little. Before we leave the subject of graphics, though, I feel I ought to say one thing about the design of the aliens themselves. They're very nicely drawn. I expected a kitchen sink to come scrolling on screen at any moment.

Daleks? ATAT scout walkers? Wolves? Piates? Parrots? Droids? Even Robin Hood? How many different things have been cribbed from other sources, I wonder? Every TV programme and film the author has ever seen I shouldn't wonder.

The sounds are sampled, of course, and thin on the ground too. No background music, no nothing. Just silky silence. I like my games a bit more noisy and naughty than that. No clumping of boots on the boards of the ships. No crunching of our feet in the leaves or the snow. The sound lets it down quite a lot I feel, apart from the brilliant idea at the start of the game; a looped sample of the open phrase of Holst's "Mars — The Bringer Of War" from The Planet Suite. This is good to listen to, but you keep wanting to hear the next bit, which is annoying.

The worst thing about the game, and the thing which points out the games design flaws, is the repeating death syndrome. If you die by falling off into the water, say, on the first level, you are replaced in the game on your next life in the same spot. Therefore when you start again you just die again. And again. And again. Until the game ends, and there's nothing you can do about it. There's no excuse for this sort of error, and it's one that should have been picked up during play testing.

This is a competently executed game, let down by some easily corrected errors, and suffers from not enough outside criticism before release.

PHIL SOUTH



▶ AMIGA	
▶ GRAPHICS	80%
▶ SOUND	45%
▶ VALUE	52%
▶ PLAYABILITY	49%
▶ OVERALL	**69%**

▶ UPDATE

No other versions are planned.

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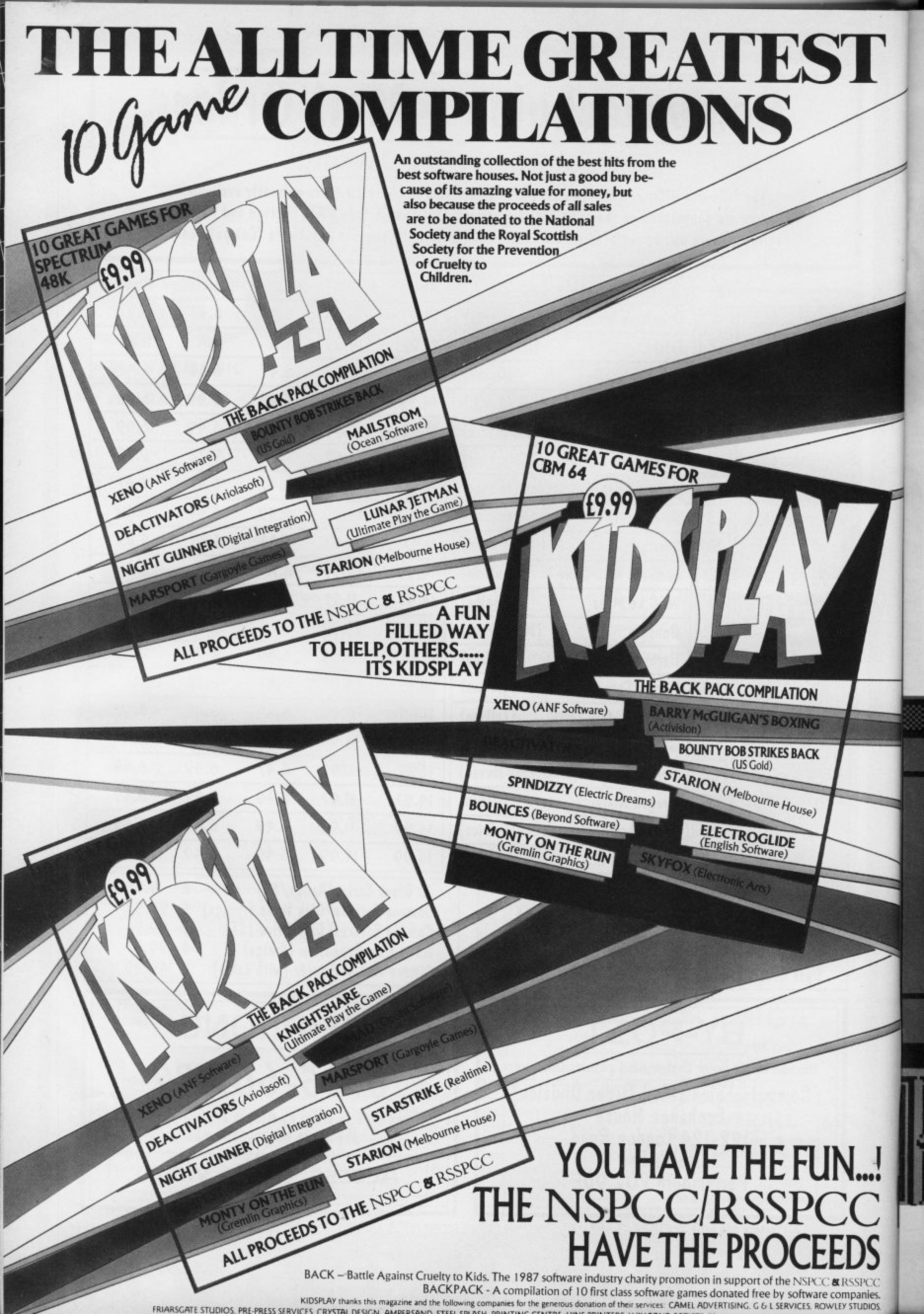
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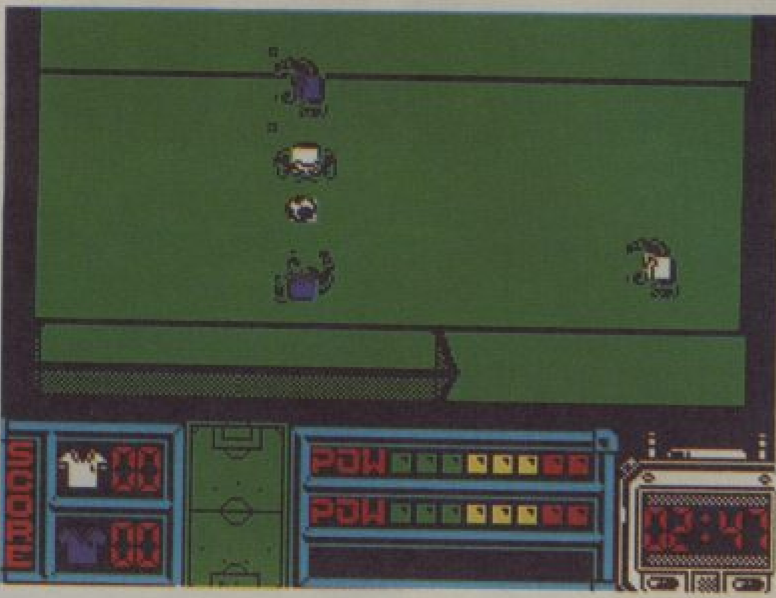
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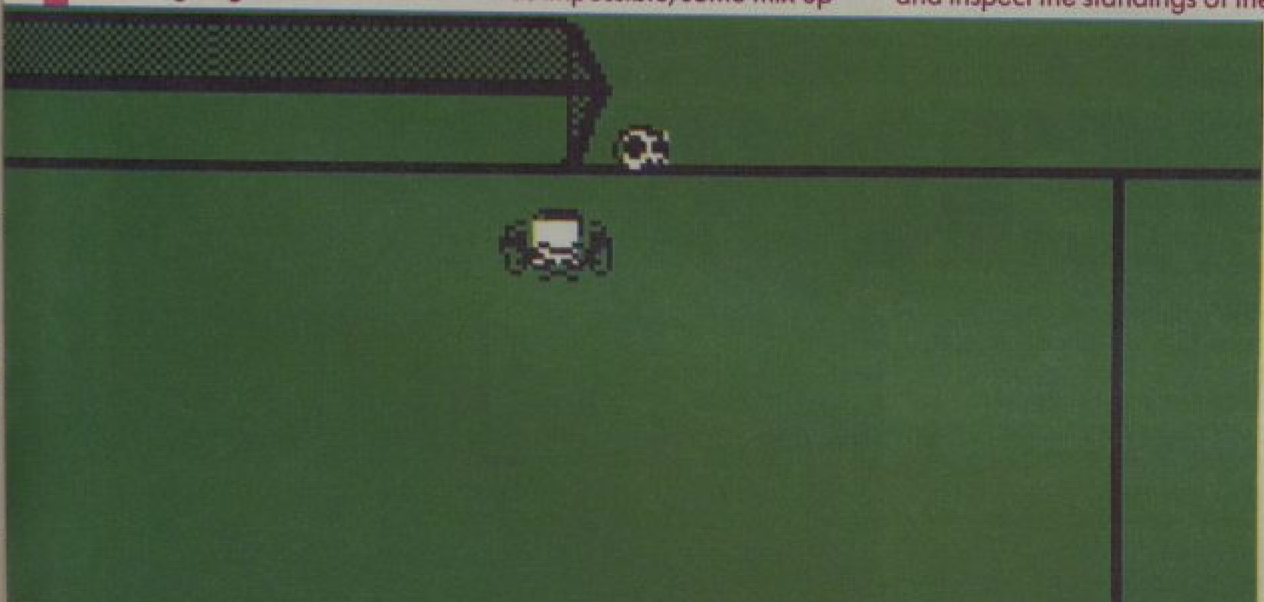
▶ GREMLIN GRAPHICS
▶ SPEC £7.99 CASS, C64/AMS £9.99 CASS, SPEC £12.99 DISK, C64/AMS £14.99 DISK.



GARY LINEKER'S HOT-SHOTS

Gaz Lineker turns up again in a Gremlin product, surprise, surprise, this time in "the most realistic football game ever produced for your computer". Hem hem. I'll be the judge of that. To my way of thinking you can't turn over too much control to the human player in a computer soccer match, as the player won't be able to control the team and just lose all the time, which is very distressing. The way it OUGHT to be done is like Ocean's Match Day II by Jon Ritman, which was to give the team a certain amount of artificial intelligence, and let them help the human player to know what's going on.

Okay so the sample we reviewed was on the Spectrum, so the fact that the game slows down every time anything moves is to be expected. But even bearing that in mind, I found the game tiresome and fiddly. Playing on the keyboard was impossible, some mix up with the move and quit keys, and so I had to reboot the game and use a Kempston joystick. You can have two players (one keys/one stick) playing at once, which is nice but it's a bit of a tight squeeze. You can initially select controls and inspect the standings of the league. Although it's not explained as such, it seems to be the World Cup, as all the other teams in the league are Brazil, Poland, Germany, etc. rather than domestic clubs. The games are then played, and the league standings judged to find the league winner.



The game is seen from above in plan view, so the player sprites are just little heads with legs poking out of the top and bottom. Each player has a little dot next to him when he is under the control of your joystick/keys. One of the good features of the game is that the goalies are automatic and track the ball, attempting a save when they detect a shot coming in. The ball grows bigger when it's kicked to give a sense of depth to the view. The controls are sluggish and the computer runs rings around your team. The odds are better against a human player, but again the speed of the game lets it down. It's hard to pin down what's duff about GL's Hot Shot!, but it lacks something special, that little extra oomph that separates the good from the so-so.

If you enjoy getting pasted at football GL's Hot Shot! is the one for you. (You little masochist, you!). Really, nothing special.

PHIL SOUTH

SPECTRUM

▶ GRAPHICS	55%
▶ SOUND	30%
▶ VALUE	46%
▶ PLAYABILITY	40%
▶ **OVERALL**	**54%**

UPDATE

All versions are very similar except for graphic superiority on 16-bit.

Reviews

ROAD BLA

▶ **US GOLD**
▶ **ST/AMIGA £19.99**

After a pretty poor 8-bit showing last year, US Gold have at last come up with the 16-bit conversions of Atari's superb avenue-annihilating coin-op. Programming is by Probe, but don't let that put you off, as the quality of their product has been visibly improving since they produced *Savage* for Firebird. ST *Road Blasters,* is undoubtedly the best arcade conversion they've done to date, and this bodes well for their conversion of Irem's *Mr Heli,* due out from Firebird later in the year.

But that's by the by. *Road Blasters,* in case you've never played it, is a 3D highway-bound blast, in which you have to carve up 52 stretches of road, as well as the occupants thereof. You control a spiffy red sports car, armed with a highly dangerous, forward-firing machine gun.

Stingers are cannonfodder. They just tootle down the highway taking up space and just asking to be turned into melting scrap! Hoo hoo! Motor cycles are just as vulnerable, but their size makes them a bit more difficult to hit. Rat Jeeps drive onto the screen in formation, then close ranks around you, but a swift finger on the fire button soon clears up any problems. The only autos immune to your guns are the armoured command cars. Not that they're invincible, mind you . . .

Periodically, a support plane flies overhead and drops a weapons pod for you to catch on the car's roof. These provide either nitro-injection to boost your top speed, electro-shielding, a rapid fire UZ cannon, or a cruise missile launcher which nukes everthing in sight. Each pod has a limited life-span displayed at the bottom of the screen on a dash board.

Fuel is also limited, and if your tanks run dry before you reach a refuelling checkpoint



or the end of the road, you're done for. Luckily, your car has two fuel tanks, a main tank which can be filled up during the course of the journey by crossing a checkpoint or picking up fuel globes from the road, and a reserve tank, which is refilled as a bonus at the end of each level.

So that's pretty much everything from the arcade game, really. Oh, yes, gun turrets, mines, puddles and spiker mines are in there as well.

Now I'm a bit of a *Road Blasters* fan. I may not be particularly good at the arcade game, but the fast 3D blasting action certainly gets the adrenalin pumping through my veins, and I'm happy to report that this has been brought across pretty well in this conversion. The graphics are fast and smooth with big colourful sprites which are

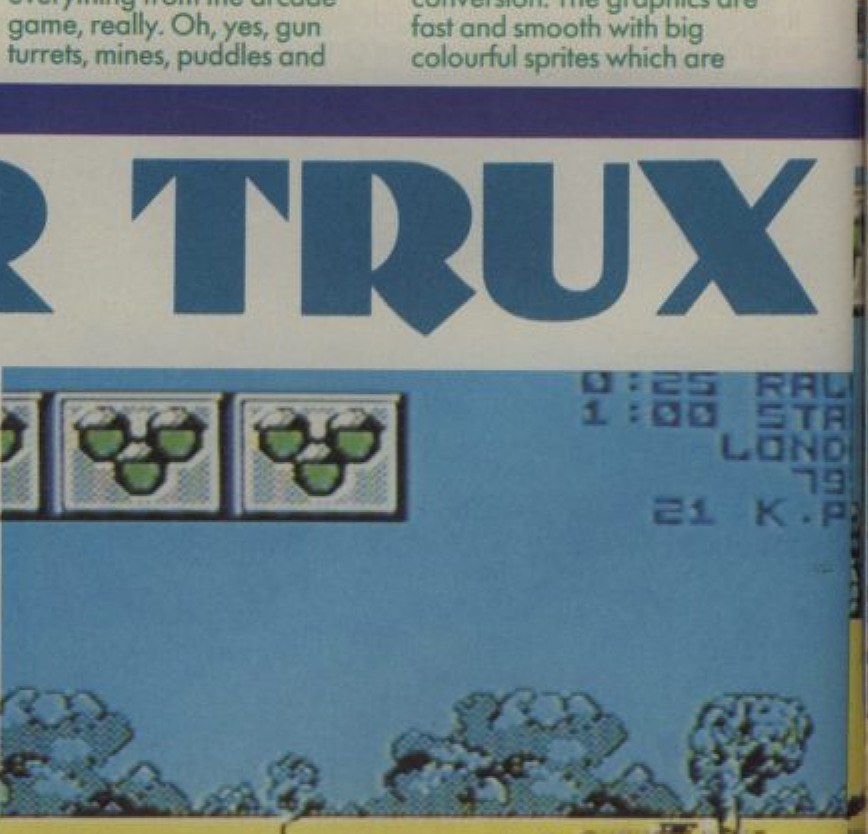
SUPER TRUX

▶ **ELITE**
▶ **SPEC £7.99 CASS, C64/AMS £9.99 CASS, C64 £11.99 DISK, SPEC £12.99 DISK, AMS £14.99 DISK**

Road Racing game have been enjoying a bit of a peak at the moment, what with *Wec Le Mans, Road Blasters* et al being converted from the arcades and various (often better) clones of same, it's something of a saturated genre. But there is a good reason for this, like most things, and that is if they're moderately well programmed they are huge mounds of fun.

Enter stage left *Supertrux,* a sort of *Hang-On* with a smokestack on top. You are a supertruck racer doing a Trans-European rally for some stupendous prize or other, and in the process of charging across Europe you encounter other trucks heading along on the same race, plus other roadside hazards in the form of trees, rocks, advertising signs, etc. All the standard stuff. As per usual you have to race to a checkpoint to qualify for the next section, and you are only allowed one or two mistakes along the way. What isn't quite standard are the traffic cones which funnel you over to the side of the road occasionally. The amazing thing about these plastic cones is that they can stop a full sized articulated lorry dead in it's tracks at full tilt. They do blip up into the air, but at some of the speeds I hit them they ought to be scraped off the road with a fish slice!

The animation is nice, especially the bit where you hit



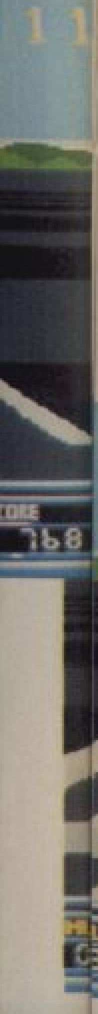
ASTERS

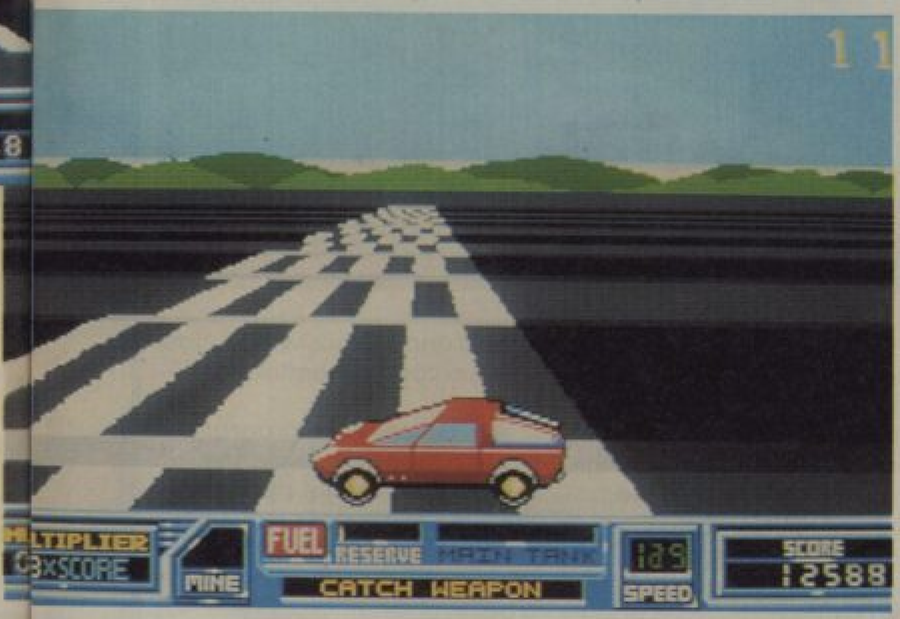
pretty good representations of their arcade counterparts.

Sound is quite good, considering this is an ST, and I was quite impressed by the spot FX which capture the dull "KARUMMPHA" of the distant cruise missile detonation, and the dull clang of bullets hitting command cars. There's a fairly average piece of music which plays during the five minute loading time (!), which for some reason, the programmers tried to run alongside the in-game FX to the detriment of both.

The only real problem with *Road Blasters* gameplay is that it's too easy. I've already said that I'm not brilliant at the arcade game, but I didn't have too many problems getting to the end of the game on level 52. Unlike the coin-op, you get five lives which you loose whenever you run out of fuel.







This is effectively a five credit "continue" option, which makes it easy to get a long way into the game quickly.

Fortunately, this is the sort of game you keep playing however far you've got into it. The levels are all pretty similar anyway, so the fun isn't derived from endurance, just from simple blasting, and so play remains enjoyable for the duration.

What more is there to say? If you're in the market for a good ST shoot 'em up, motor on down to the software shop and check out *Road Blasters.*

PAUL GLANCEY

ST

- GRAPHICS: 79%
- SOUND: 68%
- PLAYABILITY: 80%
- VALUE: 78%
- **OVERALL: 79%**

UPDATE

The Amiga version should be around pretty soon, and is expected to be pretty similar to its ST counterpart, with the probable additions of improved sound and slightly tweaked graphics.





a roadside obstacle and glance off it back into the road, the truck turns sideways into a skid and the SID chip makes an appropriate screech. I spent a lot of time trying to make it do that instead of making the checkpoint in time, I must admit. Some of the other effects are a bit cheap and tacky, but they don't spoil the playability of the game. The sense of speed is good, and the difficulty sufficient to keep you at it but it doesn't let you get away with much either.

Shame such time has been spent on 'another' game in an already overloaded genre, but not to worry. It's a good gimmick, and worth a look.

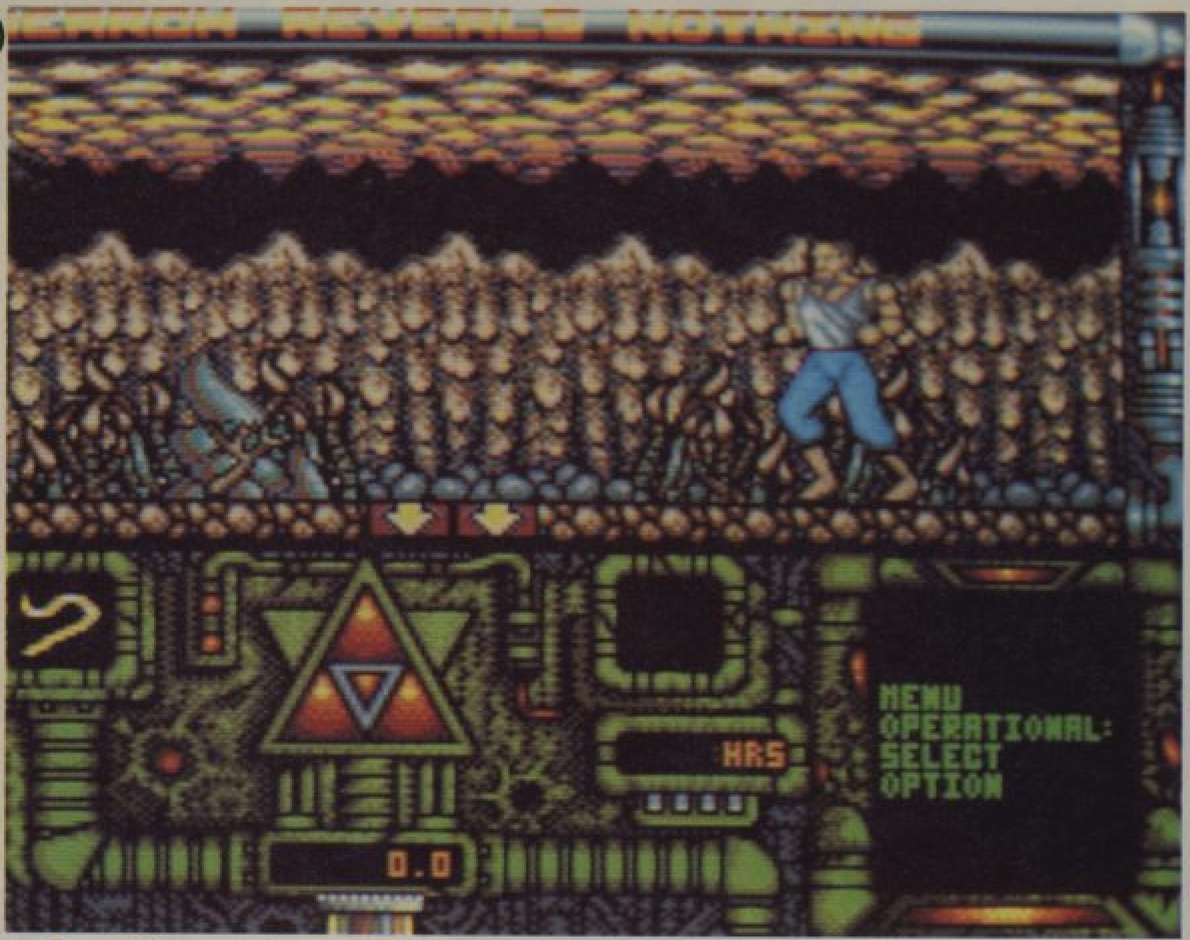
PHIL SOUTH

C64

- GRAPHICS 67%
- SOUND 65%
- VALUE 70%
- PLAYABILITY 71%
- **OVERALL 68%**



PRISON



▲ *Over 300 screens!*

► CHRYSALIS
► ST/AMIGA £19.99

Chrysalis is a relatively new name on the software scene, but the name hides a wealth of experience. Formed around the bones of Teque software, the development company responsible for the conversion of Pacmania among others, plans to continue developing games for other publishers, but also to publish its own.

The company's first game is a colourul arcade adventure with a plot similar to John Carpenter's classic B-Movie, Escape From New York.

Our hero (that's you!) is an undercover policeman convicted of a crime that he didn't commit and cast away on the penal planet Altrax.

Rumours abound of a wrecked but repairable space craft, scattered in eight different places somewhere on the planet. If our hero can find the pieces before the gangs get to him, then there's a slim chance that he can rebuild the rocket and make good his escape.

The opening screen sees the copper straded outside the locked city gates. The subsequent search for the first two objects — an access card and a wristwatch — is a good introduction to the mechanics of the rest of the game. The wristwatch, adds an extra element to the usual 'solve the puzzle' gameplay — time. Other characters have to be met at certain times — the nightclub doesn't open until 10 — that sort of thing.

Going deeper into the gameplay would be difficult without giving away some of the more rewarding solutions, but suffice it to say that the backgrounds are mostly interactive, there are plenty of REAL characters to interact with and, best of all, the puzzles are generally logical. For me, that's Prison's best aspect and a place where most other arcade adventures fall down.

Aesthetically, the program lives up to its gameplay. The graphics are crystal clear, and the main character's movement works perfectly against the intricate backgrounds creating a believable atmosphere.

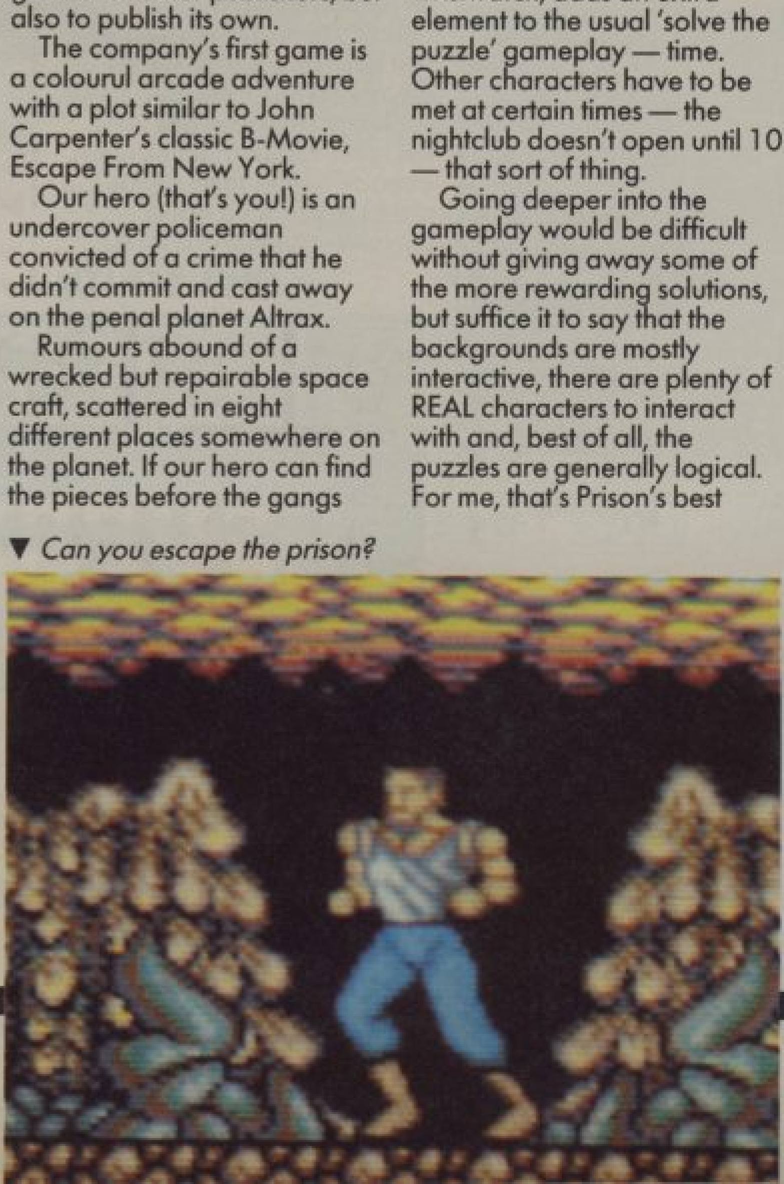
Chrysalis' debut is the one that a lot of ST gamesters have been waiting for. My main argument would be that there are already more than enough games of this type about, but the well-structured look and feel and the tidy graphic style do put this one slightly above the crowd.

CIARAN BRENNAN

AMIGA	
► GRAPHICS	76%
► SOUND	67%
► VALUE	75%
► PLAYABILITY	78%
► **OVERALL**	**77%**

ST	
► GRAPHICS	70%
► SOUND	68%
► VALUE	75%
► PLAYABILITY	78%
► **OVERALL**	**77%**

▼ *Can you escape the prison?*



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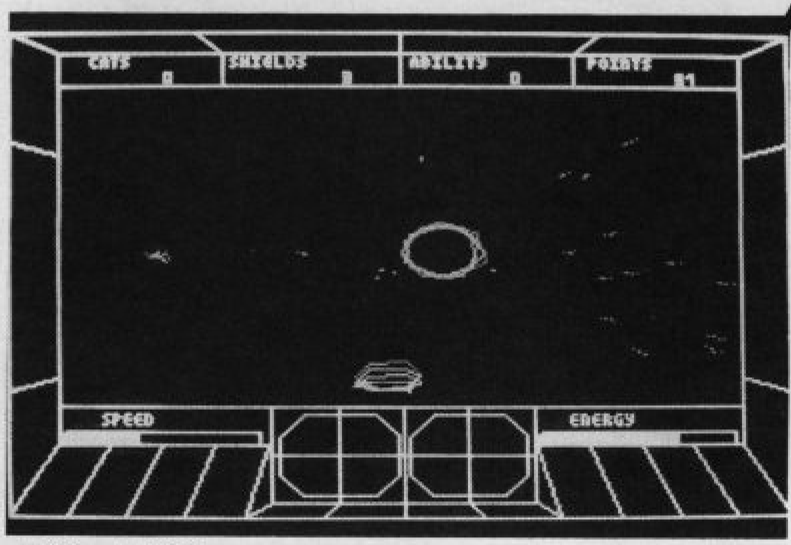
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WANDERER

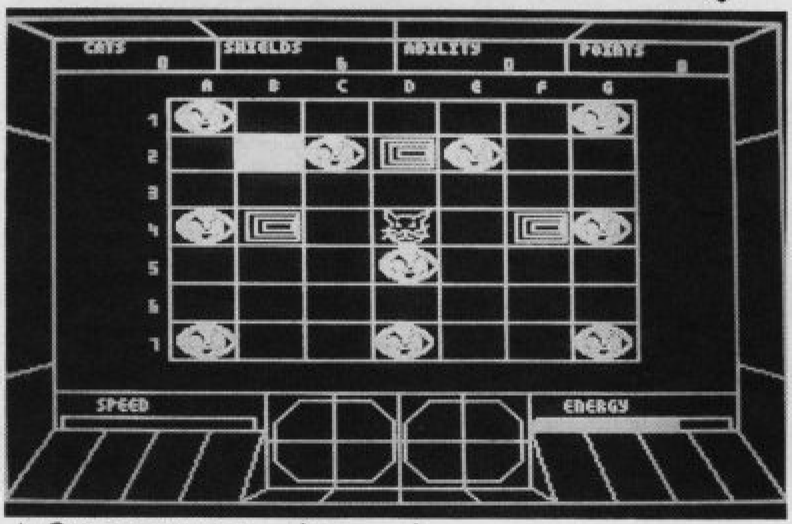
Wanderer, is a 3D space shoot 'em up featuring REAL 3D graphics of the blue and red specs variety on the ST and Amiga versions. As if that wasn't enough to make it stand out from the crowd, the programmers have bestowed upon it the weirdest plot this side of the Horsehead Nebula.



▲ *'Gimmick' 3D*

Not surprisingly, you play the Wanderer of the title, a space mercenary under contract to a federation of ten planets which is languishing under the thumb of the local dictator, Vadd. Your mission is to destroy Vadd and his army of wire-frame spaceships, by collecting enough cats to allow you entry into his space fortress, called the Sphynx.

Cats are now galactic currency, and earning the 8000 cats you need to enter the Sphynx is a matter of wandering (you're the Wanderer, remember) between planets and collecting playing cards. Each planet's strength is dependent on having a good Poker hand, and they will pay a pretty pussy for any good cards you can put their way. The better the hand, the more cats you collect in payment.



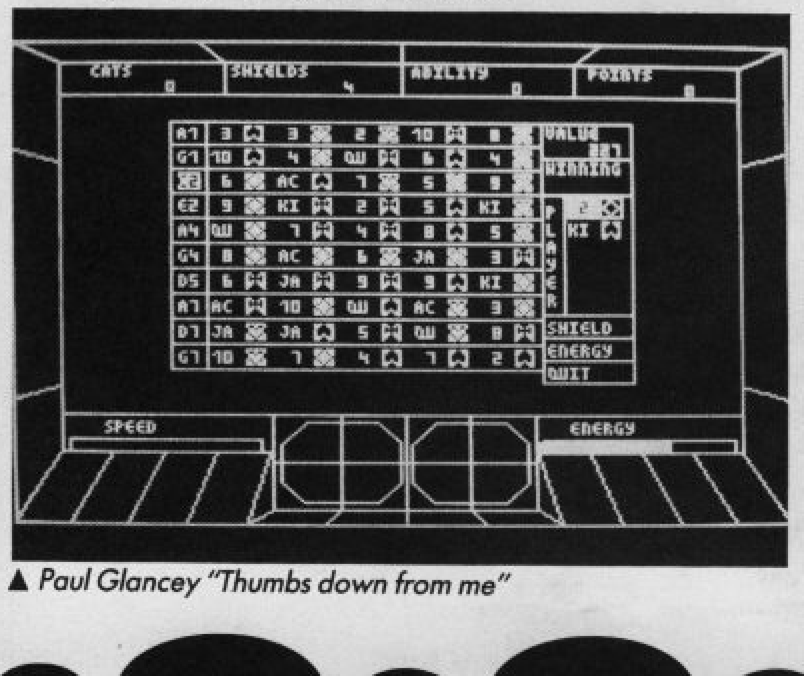
▲ *Cats are currency — how cruel.*

Interspersing the pussy Poker pastimes are the 3D battle sequences which have to be completed to allow you to move between sectors and planets.

While abstract blastables whizz towards you out of the void, you have to manoeuvre your ship so as to get them in your sights, then let rip with the lasers. There aren't any tactics nor is there any fancy flying involved. Bit of a disappointment, really. The only really stimulating sections are a flight down a tunnel to pick up an extra shield, and a trip through a winding black hole passage.

The 3D effects on the 16-bit versions are, well, they're not too bad, and they do give a fair impression of things whizzing out of the screen at you. However, they do have a couple of drawbacks. Once you've focused your eyes on the centre of the screen where the action is, reading the gauges and dials at the top of the screen means refocusing, and even then things aren't terribly clear.

The other problem lies with the VDU you're using. While the 3D effect showed up pretty well on monitors in the C+VG office, back home on my ST and Ferguson colour portable I got nothing that was really convincing even after fiddling with the contrast and colour controls.



▲ *Paul Glancey "Thumbs down from me"*

The Spectrum version doesn't feature the 3D option, which is hardly surprising considering the colour problems which would have to be overcome. Unfortunately, the action in this version is pretty slow, which is surprising considering how well the Spectrum usually handles vector graphics.

I didn't like *Wanderer* much. There just isn't anything in the game to keep you coming back for more.
Even the 3D gimmick doesn't compensate for the vacuous gameplay, so I'm afraid this gets the thumbs down from me.

PAUL GLANCEY

AMIGA

► GRAPHICS:	44%
► SOUND:	49%
► PLAYABILITY:	39%
► VALUE:	30%
► OVERALL:	**31%**

SPECTRUM

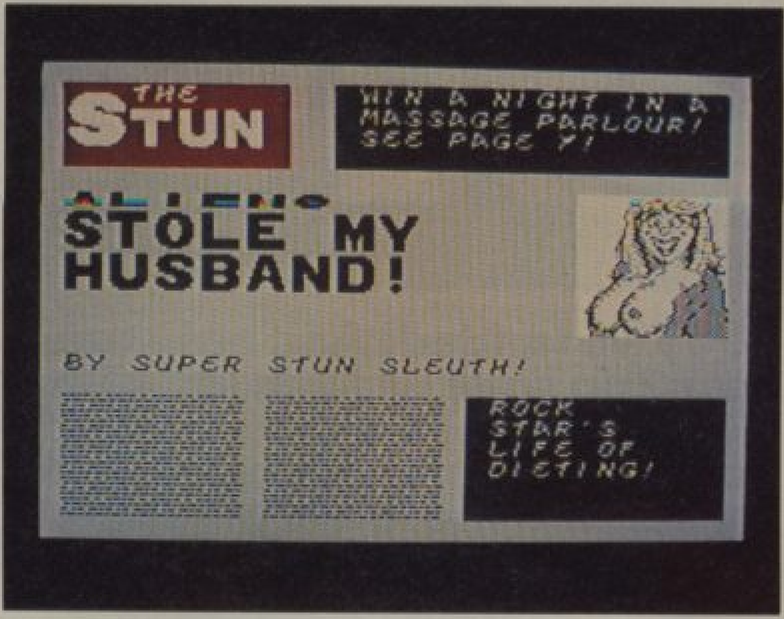
► GRAPHICS:	30%
► SOUND:	40%
► PLAYABILITY:	28%
► VALUE:	27%
► OVERALL:	**29%**

UPDATE

The ST version is very similar to the Amiga game, but with added sound deficiencies. On the C64, the vector graphics are terribly slow, as you would expect, and even the Amstrad version has a speed problem.


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ROCK STAR

The hype states, though not in so many words, you can be a rock star. This isn't strictly true. In Rock Star you, in fact, are the manager of a rock star. It's your job to take them from the bottom rung to a leading charting, groovy rock band like Def Leppard or Cinderella.

The first thing you have to do when forming a band is to find the various members who will make up the band. You and your sidekick, Drop Dead Clive, are pictured sitting in front of a TV set, which flashes up pictures of famous personalities like Ted 'Newsagent' Nugent and Michael 'Wacky' Jacko. It also tells you exactly how much it costs a week to keep them going. When you've chosen the right number of artistes (from a solo effort to a four piece, the choice is yours), you then choose a name that for you, sums up rock and roll in a short phrase, that brings out the entire essence of the band as well as being catchy and different. Like Def Leppard or Cinderella.

To start with, you have three basic options. You can stick the group into a studio and force them to rehearse (from one to five days). You can shove them on the road for up to a week, doing anything from pubs to stadiums (budget allowing; of course, stadiums are expensive to book for one night, and you start with only £50,000) with variable ticket prices. Or, you can go for a bit of publicity. Publicity can be either good or bad, but as Clive has a habit of pointing out, any publicity is good publicity. Unless, of course, a stunt goes disastrously wrong, and you're left with headlines like 'Rock Star Dies In Nuclear Holocaust'. Lose all your band members this way and it's game over.

The same applies when you run out of money. The bank balance drops when you pay wages, buy equipment or book venues or rehearsal studios. It goes back up when you run a successful tour, or when your records are selling well.



Yes, you can release records. After a short while, the phone will ring and a record company will offer you a recording deal, which will either be amazingly fab or terrible. Accept it and you can record an album, followed up by the release of singles, each with a video if required. Get a platinum selling album and you've cracked the game.

Easily Code Masters best yet. Nice graphics, a good handful of interesting tunes and good use of sarcasm in the charts (Cindy Cleavage with her hit, 'Give Me back My Shirt'). Fun, but due to the small number of options, a little short lived.

Amstrad and C64 versions should be available as you read this, and funnily enough, so should the Spectrum version. They all feature the same gameplay, but the C64 should boast better sound and the Amstrad version should have better graphics.

TONY DILLON

SPECTRUM	
► GRAPHICS:	80%
► SOUND:	69%
► VALUE:	71%
► PLAYABILITY:	70%
► OVERALL:	**71%**

UPDATE

Code Masters will not be coding Rock Star for 16 bit computers — which is a shame, as the basic idea is a good one. Amstrad and C64 versions will have improved graphics and sound.

BIG *Screen*

They've landed! And only one man can save us from (dom, dom, dom. . .) the movies that came from outer space. Ward R Street with the latest invaders.

The Fifties were the heyday of the science fiction film. That's when we suffered an invasion of the Bodysnatchers, some Invaders From Mars, It (who came from Outer Space) and every other type of alien with an eye to intergalactic imperialism.

The thing that marked out these movies wasn't just the number of squatters from space - behind the science fantasy lay serious themes, usually concerning Cold War communist paranoia.

Alien Nation(18) is a direct descendant of those S-F, message movies. We no longer worry about a Red



Alien Nation — a film with a message.

(Planet) menace, so its aliens are refugees, genetically engineered slaves whose transporter crashes in California. The U.S. living up to its reputation as a haven for immigrants, absorbs them into its melting pot.

Apart from thier bald, mottled skulls, absence of ears and slanted nostrils the aliens look more human than your average bug eyed monster, Just don't let them breathe on you if they've been out for a night on the town - they get drunk on sour milk!

The visitors integrate into society pretty easily, rising in the ranks of big business and even the police department. But - here comes the theme - there is racial tension. Not everyone gets on well with the generally innocuous invaders. Like policeman James Caan, whose partner was iced by one of the 'slags' as he contemptuously calls them.

Almost every eighties cop film features an odd couple teaming and this is no exception. Caan takes alien Mandy Patinkin as his new sidekick in the hope that the 'slag' will help him avenge the murder. Inevitably, mutual distrust gives way to understanding and respect as they start to uncover an alien criminal underworld.

The liberal anti-racism allegory adds a little depth to this violent action thriller, raising it above the mainstream. It's not a sci-fi classic but the contrast of apparently contemporary Los Angeles streets filled with odd-looking aliens is striking. Would the film's racial problems really arise? I think not . . . because we'd kill the aliens immediately they landed!

One alien I'd gladly take a pot shot at is the star of **My Stepmother is an Alien**(15) - even though she is played by pouting Kim Basinger. I'm not homicidal just because she arrives on earth looking for a man and picks pudgy Dan Ackroyd rather than me!

She chooses the ex-Blues Brother because he's a dedicated scientist who has blasted a high powered radar message into space. Even a man whose eyes are firmly focussed fifty million miles out among the stars must fall for Kim, despite her klutzy attempts at imitating an earth being, which he finds cute.

What he doesn't see is that she has some other odd habits - including talking to her handbag. 'My Stepmother's Best Friend is an Old Bag' could have been an alternative title because the bag hides her aide, an eye on a stalk sort of thing, which is all for totalling the earth. Aykroyd's daughter discovers this but not surprisingly has a hard time persuading dad that her new step-mom is literally out of this world.

Sound silly? It is. Sound like the makings of a good comedy? Perhaps - but this isn't it! It's all too cutesy, in a sit-com sort of way, to take off, despite its stars. For lovers of Bewitched only!



What ugly nuns!

To see how a romantic comedy should really be done look up to **The Tall Guy**(15), a British comedy directed by Mel Smith which is as fresh as Stepmother is stale.

Jeff Goldblum, last seen buzzing around as The Fly, adopts a different disguise this time. He's the Elephant Man in a tacky, tasteless West End musical. But he only dons the monstrous deformities - and little grey trunk - after being sacked by a self-satisfied star comedian, played by Rowan Atkinson.

When Goldblum's hayfever starts to disrupt Atkinson's show he gets an ultimatum - get cured or get out. So he visits the hospital for injections where he falls hopelessly in love with no-nonsence nurse Emma Thompson. But dare he date her?

Shy Jeff eventually plucks up courage and spends a passionate afternoon with her - only to miss the start of the show. Now he has a girlfriend but no job and all looks black until he gets the lead role in Elephant. But even then the course of true love runs like a rusty bike with a bent front wheel.

Tall Guy is piled high with ideas. Not only is the plot as busy as a rush hour bus, there are dozens of weird characters on the sidelines. Goldblum's nymphomaniacal landlady always seems to have a man in her bed - or even the wardrobe. Suggsy of Madness appears for a musical number when mere words will no longer suffice for the emotion!

The script, by Richard Curtis of Black Adder fame, is brilliant; the performances are all excellent; and I want tickets for the first night of Elephant, the most tasteless musical since Springtime for Hitler in The Producers. Undoubtedly the funniest film of the month!

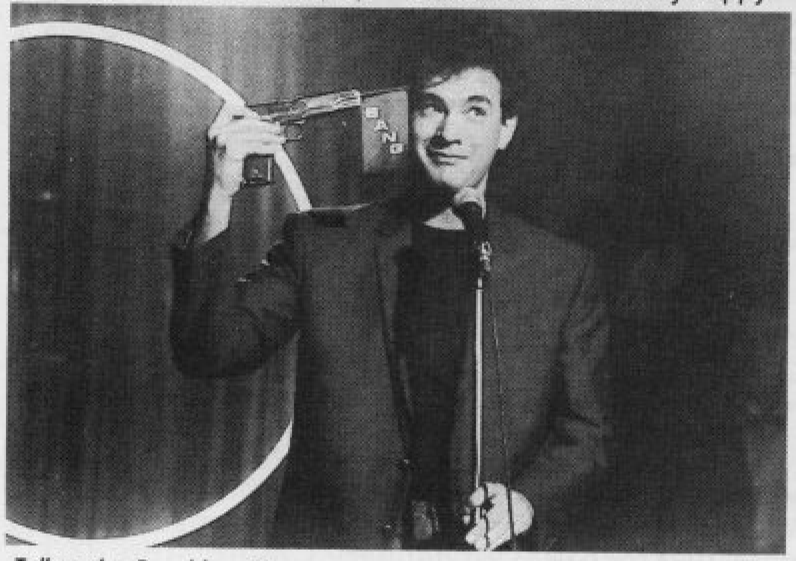
Running it close second is **Crossing Delancey**(PG), a Jewish-American view of affairs of the heart. Amy Irving is an attractive young woman with a good job but no boyfriend. So her grandmother hires the local matchmaker to find her a man.

While Amy sets her sights on roguish novelist Jeroen Krabbe, the matchmaker provides Peter Riegert, a good Jewish boy with his own pickle shop. Who will Amy choose?

BIG Screen

If your idea of comedy is Police Academy and you keep dropping off unless somebody fires a gun every five minutes, you probably won't care. But anybody who appreciates beautifully observed, warmly romantic slices of life will want to cross Delancey with this *movie which is* as buoyant as one of Krabbe's novels and as sharp as Riegert's pickles.

For a film which is about comedy there are surprisingly few laughs in **Punchline**(15),



Tell us the Punchline, Tom.

a story of struggling stand up comedians in New York. Instead the accent is on the trials and tribulations of trying to make it in the tough world of cabaret.

Raising it all above the mundane is Tom Hanks as a medical student who, flunking his exams because he believes that laughter is really the best medicine. Meanwhile, housewife and mother Sally Field wants to break away from the drudgery of preparing dinner for her husband by becoming a star. They both perform at The Gas Station club.

Though there's a lot that's good about Punchline, including yet another superb performance from Hanks, the story seems like a joke you've heard a hundred times before. It never quite raises itself above the superior television movie level and in the end fails to pack sufficient punch.

I mentioned odd-couple cop teams. By contrast Sherlock Holmes and Watson would appear to be ideally matched - unless you believe **Without a Clue**(PG), that is. With Michael Caine as Holmes you could guess that this is not going to be gospel Conan Doyle.

In fact Holmes does not exist. He's a fiction, a figment of Watson's imagination, created for The Strand magazine. But the public demands its hero so Watson, brilliantly played by Ben (Ghandi) Kingsley, employs drunken womanising ham actor Reginald Kincaid (Caine) to imitate him. While Holmes/Kincaid stalks around saying 'Elementary' an awful lot, Watson gets down to the real detection.

I don't think Conan Doyle would have been very happy



Michael Caine Without a Clue.

with the film's story,which includes shoot outs better suited to more modern cop films, but it you're not a Holmes purist you'll probably forgive the liberties because Without a Clue certainly has an idea about how to be funny. Caine and Kingsley are a superb double act, and this is an ingenious twist on a classic tale.

It's also a lot better than **The Dead Pool** (18), the latest of the increasingly weary Dirty Harry films. I can only feel that Clint Eastwood's heart is really in his personal projects, like Bird, nowadays, because his normally tight-lipped performance is positively comatose this time.

It's also hard to tell whether the series has stopped taking itself seriously. Sequences such as the car chase between a full size auto and radio controlled model, packed with explosive, wouldn't have looked out of place in the old Batman TV series.

The story concerns a series of mysterious deaths, all linked to a list compiled by hack, slasher film director Liam Neeson (a truly awful performance). But don't dirty your hands with Harry's investigations when there are so many better films about.

Films like **Patty Hearst** (18) for example. If this was fiction Clint Eastwood would appear, magnum blazing, to rescue the kidnapped heiress. But it's a true story and Patty was only freed from her captors, a ramshackle revolutionary group called the Symbionese Liberation Army, after she, joined them on several robberies.

Director Paul Schrader, who wrote Taxi Driver, is known for his tough approach, and here he's particularly uncompromising. The first half hour is almost experimental as light and dark cast crazy silhouettes and voices come out of nowhere.

The result recreates Patty's terror as she lay bound and blindfolded in a cupboard and it helps us understand how, when she was freed, she could actually feel grateful to the thugs who had kidnapped her. Having established its hold the film never lets go as the SLA breaks up and eventually Patty is captured.

Not an easy film but a masterpiece of sorts, with a brilliant central performance from Natasha Richardson.

This month has also dredged up a good crop of smaller movies of which the best, and probably the most accessible, is **The Year My Voice Broke** (15), a story of teenage love in outback Australia during the late 50's. It's at times funny, at times heart-achingly sad - at least for an elderly romantic like myself - and proves that there's more to Oz than Neighbours!

John Sayles' **Matewan** (15)



Matewan — "Powerful".

deals with a bloody mining strike in America during the twenties, which must sound like an instant turn-off, but it held me transfixed for the full two hours. The mining company actually owned the town of Matewan, so when the men went on strike they found themselves homeless. A powerful tale of extreme bravery.

Say ta for **Da** (PG) as well, a warmly nostalgic tale of American writer Martin Sheen visiting the small Irish town where his father has just died. He's visited by memories of the old man, a comically cussed character, but its all saved from sentimentality by some sharp observations on how we react to death.



Stealing Heaven.

Not so **Stealing Heaven**(15), a re-telling of the medieval tale of Abelard and Heloise, the middle ages most famous young lovers. Apart from some surprisingly explicit rumpy-pumpy there's little attraction in this dreary costume drama.

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Play Masters

Beat 'em up fans are in for a treat this month, with a glorious Vigilante player's guide to help you clear New York of the marauding street scum AND rescue the lovely Madonna in the process. There's also the usual goodie-bag of POKEs and cheats, as well as The Playmasters Highscore — if you haven't sent in your record scores — do it now. Don't forget there are bumper software packages on offer to the senders of the best tips of the month — so send in your stuff to: PLAYMASTERS, C+VG, PRIORY COURT, 32-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON, EC1R 3AU, and you could well receive a bulging parcel of the latest software for your machine.

Julian Rignall



DALEY THOMPSON'S OLYMPIC CHALLENGE

Richard Davis of London has a list of the correct shoes to use in this jolly good sports simulation. For training, use the training shoes. 100m dash, running spikes. Long jump, long spikes. High jump, flat shoes. Hurdles, short spikes. Discus, half spikes. Pole vault, track shoes. 400m, running spikes. Ok? Now go and beat your records.

FLYING SHARK

On the ST version of this shoot 'em up enter either HSC or KDJ on the highscore table while holding down 5 on the neumeric keypad as you enter the last letter. HSC gives you unlimited lives and KDJ knocks out the sprite/sprite detection. Cheers to Richard Davis for that one.

EXOLON

Right, ST players of this Hewson game are advised to type in ad astra on the highscore table (note — lower case) and you're granted with unlimited lives. Another thankyou to Richard Davis for that.

Rambo III

The last ST tip from Richard Davis is one for this rather disappointing ST game-of-the-film. Type RENEGADE on the highscore table and you can use 1,3 and 3 on the keyboard to access the level of your choice. Hoorah, and various other noises of delight.

FOOTBALL DIRECTOR II

Jamie Sythes is a bit of a cheeky young word processor whizz! Yes he is — because he's discovered that if you save a game, and load it into an ASCII text processor like ST Organiser or Protext you can change your bank balance. Just go down to the eigth line from the bottom. There you'll find some figures that coincide with your bank balance. Change this to lots of dosh and save the file and reload it into the game, and you'll have tons of spondoolicks to lash out on star players and ground improvements and fings.

R-TYPE

Come all ye 64 people — get cheating with this fabberooni listing from Adrian Sharp of Whitehaven, Cumbria. Type in the listing, RUN it, plop the R-Type tape in and press play and you'll find the sprite detection has gone off on its hols.

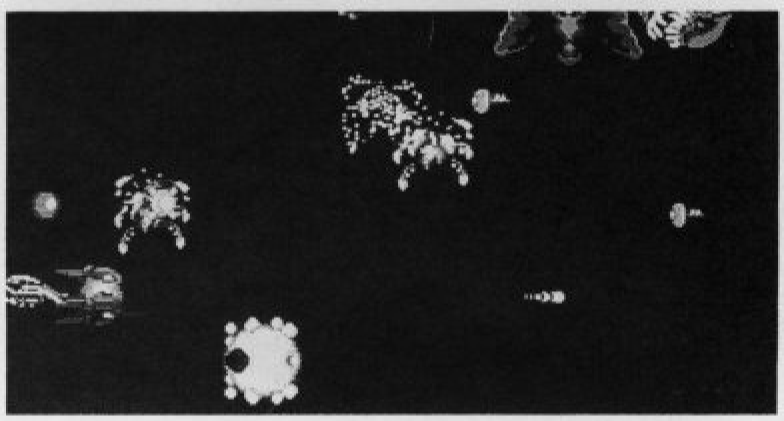
```
1 FOR I = 384 TO 412:
HEAD A: POKE I, A: NEXT
2 SYS 384
3 DATA 32, 86,245,
169,114,141, 110, 8, 169
4 DATA 1, 141,111, 8, 76,
14, 8, 169, 173,141, 157,
50
5 DATA 169, 96, 141, 156,
49, 76, 18, 8
```

BAAL

Kevin Griffiths of Wolverhampton has the locations of all the rocket bases. On level one go to 00-00, 00-55, 16-31, 13-62, 24-04, 27-54, 36-28, 58-37, 49-02 and 48-66. On level two troll around to 12-17, 12-57, 22-00, 29-34, 35-03, 48-31 and 59-00. There aren't any bases on level three so yar boo sucks!

ROBOCOP (Ocean)

Corks on stalks! Sean "You Hum It Son" Reece of Bishop Auckland has sent in a cheat mode for this fab march 'n' murder game, but



alas, the silly billy forgot to say which format it was for! And, would you believe it — all our office copies have gone walkabout, so I wasn't able to test it. Tchaah! Any road, if you've got a copy knocking about, you've not nothing to lose by loading it up and typing SUEDEHEAD when the high score is flashing on the first load. And it doesn't end there, for apparently the second load yields to the magic word DISAPPOINTED (is that meant to have two "S"s, I wonder?).

PUFFY'S SAGA (UBI Soft)

Darren Short, a Petts Wood person, knows an interesting fact about this jeu Francçaise, namely un mode de cheat, which, if you'll excuse my French, provides beaucoup de choses for frustrated Puffys. When your health is dwindling, run your fingers along keys F1 to F7 to take delivery of four keys and a heap of health points, and get warped to another level.

TIMES OF LORE (Origin)

Darren Short returns with some handy advice on potions and scrolls for the ST version of this mega-RPG.

Brown scroll — Kills all monsters on the screen.
White scroll — Freezes all monsters for a limited time.
Green scroll — Random energy top-up.
Green potion — Complete energy top-up.

STAR RAY (Logotron)

Another ST cheat mode from the one, the only, Darren Short, which, in case you're interested, provides infinite shield strength. Play the game as usual, then when things start getting rough type AL and then hit the space bar to access the options screen. Now type YANKOVIC, press fire to return to the game, and you should now be able to press F5 to gain an invincible ship.

Play Masters

VIGILANTE

BADDIES


The most common thug — one kick and he's history.


Don't let him close — four kicks to total this guy.


A deadly foe — watch his knife and kick or punch.

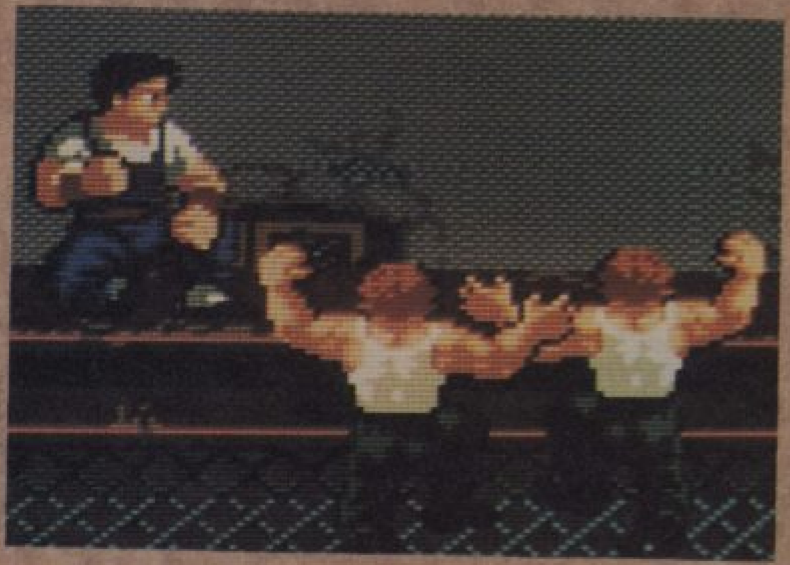

Another deadly guy — use knife tactics.


Jump and kick this one — then punch him.


Simple kicks and punches — watch that bat.


Duck the bullets and run.


Jump and kick the biker.


Low kick these off the crane before they grab you!


Quickly wiggle the joystick to shake off the attackers.

BIG BADDIES



Pin him against the van and kick or use nunchukkas.



Duck their high kicks and use low kicks/punches.



First use a high kick to knock him back . . .



Then use a couple of low kicks before high kicking again.



High kicks to stun this guy before he jumps down . . .



Then high and low kicks like the last level.



Get in very close and use repeated low kicks . . .

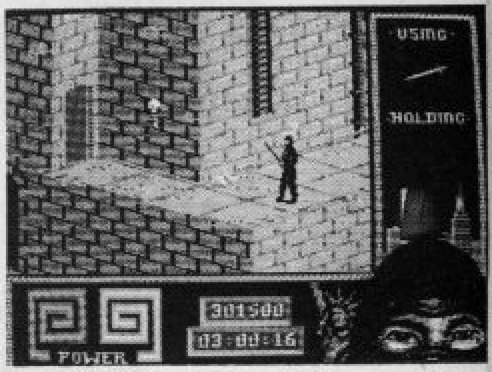


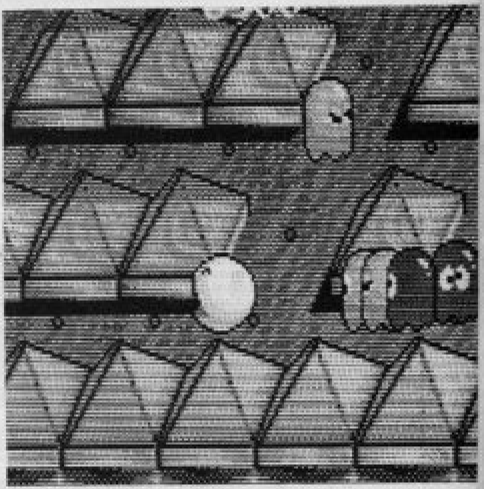
But watch out he doesn't grab you!

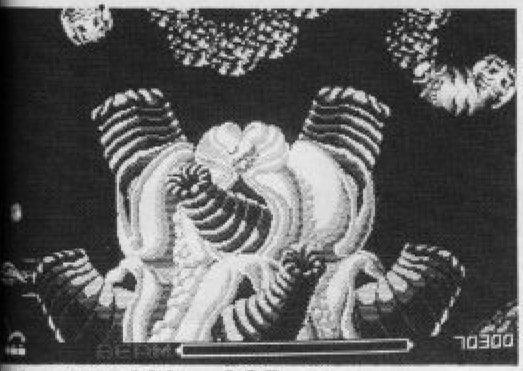


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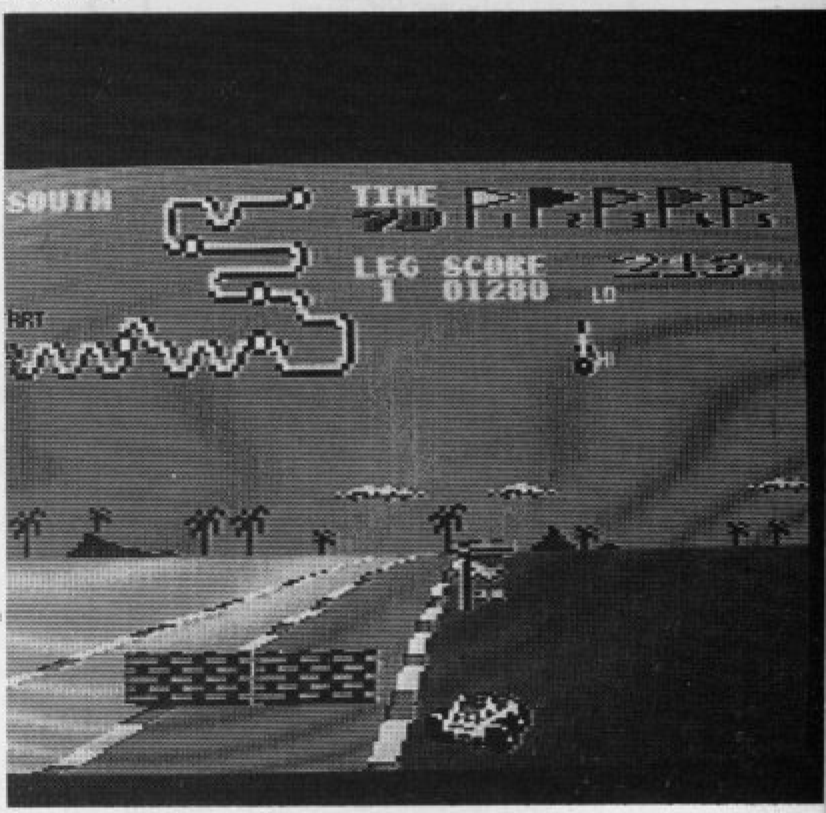
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Dear PALS at C+VG
Please, PLEASE, PLEASE could you send me a T-Shirt + a cassette of Thunderblade as I am too poor to buy it myself (sob!). I won't be able to use the game much because the electricity costs a lot.

This is the fourth time I have sent a letter to C+VG and probably the last because I can't afford it.

Sorry about the mess but I couldn't afford a good pen. Also I'm sorry about how the letter's so short but the ink's expensive and so is the paper.

Yours Hopefully,
G. Phillips, Milkwood, Rhydycroesau, Oswestry, Shropshire.
P.S. I've got an Amstrad CPC 464 if you feel kind.

Stone me, you're in a bad way old mate. Sorry about the short reply but I couldn't afford the time.

Dear C+VG
Do you believe that my little (four years old) bro has pulled all the tape out of my new tape "Dragon Ninja".

This was my best game ever (while it lasted!) and I was just getting used to it when my brother did the unspeakable deed.

I won't be able to buy another tape. But take warning DON'T let your little brothers wreck your tapes.

Yours truly,
Bryan Phillips, Milkwood, Rhydycroesau, Oswestry, Shropshire.
P.S. If C+VG feel kind I've got an Amstrad CPC 464.

No I don't believe it any more than the other one.

Dear YOB
At the moment I do not own a computer. I hope to get an Amiga when I have raised the dosh.

I buy your mag because it is value for money and it tells me what to look out for. You're probably wondering why I don't buy 'The One', well they haven't learnt to review games properly yet.

I have included one list of things I'd like you to do to your Mag to make it even more Mega than it is already.
1. Glue the pages together instead of staples because when you staple mags they always fall apart.
2. More colour reviews.
3. A couple of cartoons.
Yours sincerely
Simon Trickett, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
P.S. When will we get the results of the Body Rap competition and the Thunderblade Arcade Machine Competition. I was up from 5 pm to 1 am looking for words. I found nearly 200 words.

Both of these competitions were in the January 89 issue.

1. Try it yourself, then you'll know why we don't do it. Actually, the real reason is it would put up the cost of the mag.
2. As you will see in this truly splendiferous ish, we've been splashing it about all over the shop. According to a recent poll our review pages are now 99.99 percent glorious full colour — with one or two minor exceptions.
3. What did you have in mind? Bugs Bunny, or Daffy Duck perhaps.
P.S. The Thunderblade compo results were published last month and I hate to break it to you like this, but you didn't win. We're still judging the Body Rap entries — keep practising.

Dear YOB
I am writing to you in connection with last month's edition of C+VG (March), I am the one who sent you the joke about Garry in a race. You got my name right (Paul Harrison) but you got where I live wrong, you put Kent when in actual fact it is KENDAL, please correct this mistake as my friends don't believe I sent in the joke.
from Paul Harrison, of Kendal, Cumbria.
P.S. I've got another joke for Garry: Garry is so absolutely unbelievably fat, that if he was to enter a sumo wrestling competition he would put them all to shame!

No, that wasn't you, it was a different Paul Harrison, from Kent. As if any proof were needed, his GW joke towers above your miserable effort and your attempt to steal his glory is nothing short of pathetic.

Dear YOB
I have a complaint to make, in Feb's ish of C+VG I noticed something — the Mail Bag page was the wrong way round. It started on Page 88 and finished on Page 87. What happened!? Apart from that I think C+VG is the most packed, brilliantly reviewed mag in the world.

It has everything a mag could want (apart from 'Dildoid Dillon!) great reviews for every computer apart from the C16 (Aaaarrrgghh) or the ZX81 (even more Aaaarrgggg!!).

And, I think the 'Arcade Action' part is brill. But couldn't you make 'Play Masters' a little easier to understand instead of it all being scrunched up so you don't know whether it's a cheat for Op Wolf or Robocop.

And what does (deep breath) AGM, PGM, FRP, RPG, PBM, and the WEC in WEC LEMANS stand for???

And where in South Wales can I get 'Battle Cars from?
Simon 'Geenius' Barrett, Church Village, Nr Pontypridd, Mid Glam, South Wales.
P.S. I've got a great diet for Ole Garry Williams. Eat what you want, but don't swallow it!! Ha! Ha! Boing!

Congratulations! You spotted it. We decided to print the pages the wrong way round in the Feb Ish as part of a secret compo for eagle-eyed readers. The prize was to have been a pair of Garry Williams' unwashed underpants, but they exploded last Thursday afternoon. If you're interested Garry is willing to



part with the socks he wore to the 1973 FA cup final — and all the following week.

As for Playmasters, I can read it, and if it wasn't so scrunched up we wouldn't be able to cram so much in every month now would we?

All those three letter abbreviations (TLAs), well, as James Stewart once said "If you don't know I can't tell you son". But I am reliably informed that WEC stands for 'We Eat Chips'.

Where's South Wales?

Dear Sir
I have been reading your magazine for quite some years and C+VG has always been the best. I am 14 and I'm doing a project on what I'd like to do when I'm older, I would like to be a games reviewer working for your magazine. I'm mad on computers and arcade machines and I've owned some decent computers in the past. Here is a list of what I've owned: an Atari console, the one which was out a long time ago, then I had a Commodore 64 and then a Sega Master System, but now I am a proud owner of a Commodore Amiga. I was wondering if you can send me some information for my project about how to become a games reviewer, actually, I'm not wondering, I'm pleading, because it is vital for me to get hold of some information otherwise I'm going to get badly done at school.
Yours faithfully,
Warren Wickenden, 60 Woodcote, Grove Road, Coulsdon, Surrey CR3 2AD.

Dear Sir/Madam,
Please could you inform me on how to become a games reviewer (printed monthly in your magazine), for I would like a cushy job similar to this myself. I own a Sega games system, and a Spectrum +2. I would be very grateful for any information you could send me. Thanking you in anticipation.
Yours faithfully,
Mark Metcalfe, 37 West Grange Drive, Leeds LS10 3AX.

If you think being a games reviewer is a cushy job, you've got another think coming. If you're really interested, send a sample review to Eugene.

Dear YOB
A number of weeks ago I purchased Robocop on disk for my Commodore 64. Everything seemed fine, until level two, screen four, when all of the background characters were messed up, "totally", which makes the GAME unpassable after this point.

So I sent it back. Before it came back I tried a friend's tape version on his machine. And behold, the same problem. So this was getting worrying, had Ocean messed up Robocop?

My replaced copy arrived, so I yet again battled my way through (and it is not very easy) and not to my surprise, still the same screwed up background graphics.

I have contacted two other friends with 64's and they have come across the same problem.

Through a 64 user group I am in, I have been told that everybody who has made it to this level has come across the major bug.

Considering the amount of time and money that had gone into this major licence, this is unbelievable. So I hope you print this letter to inform the people who have not made it to this level of Robocop on the Commodore 64.

I don't know about everyone else but I want a 'fully' working copy of the product that I paid for, I will finish by thanking you for producing an excellent magazine.
Yours sincerely,
Sean Ryan, Waterford, Ireland.

Sounds like a right nasty little bug. I have sent your letter to Ocean for them to comment.



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ARCADE



NASTAR

Nastar from Taito is the next original beat 'em up. Just jiggle the letters around and what do you get? RASTAN. Remember Rastan Saga? A bash 'em up from the early days and very popular it was too.

Well Taito have changed a few graphics, added a few bits here and there and come up with this little gem which, to be fair, is the best of this month's quota.

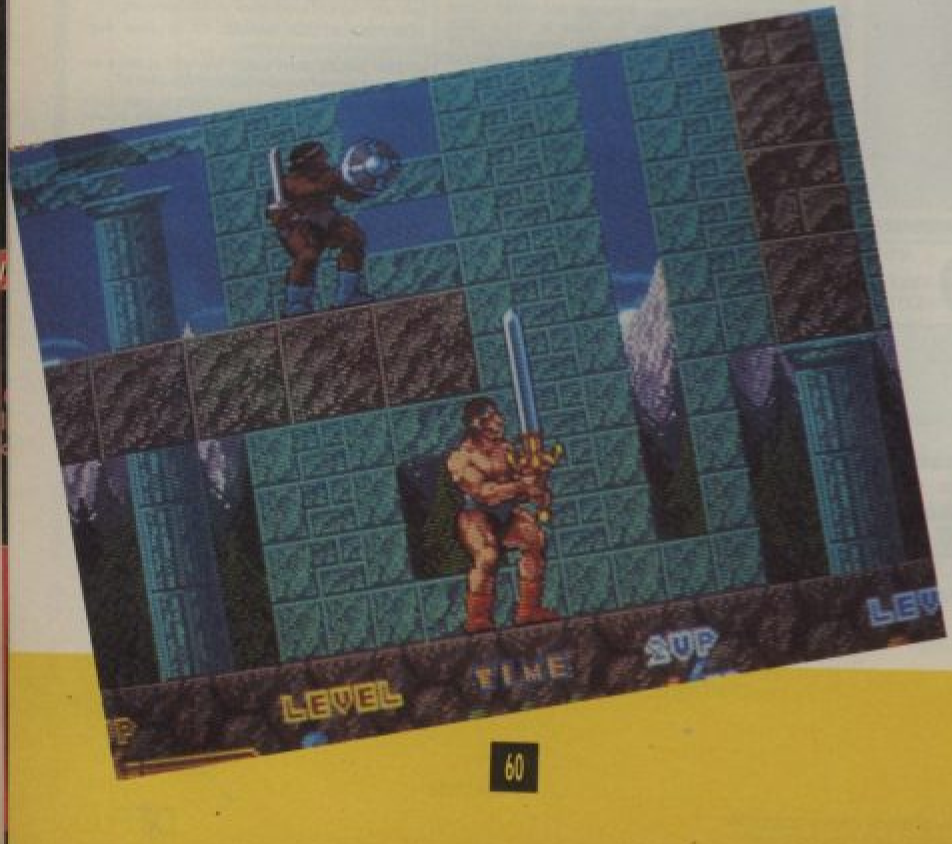
The graphics are clear and well drawn but are let down by the clumsy movement. The beginning of game blurb waffles on about the fact that you're a warrior trying to protect a skyscraper from the baddies. Skyscaper! As far as I could see there was nothing remotely resembling one.

Using your sword stab at the skeletons, wraiths, bats and other aliens as they shuffle towards you. Occasionally one leaves behind a bonus feature which gives you, for a short time a revolving shield of orbs, a larger sword, fireballs and the like.

Hopping onto and over largish pillars you travel deeper into the non-existent skyscraper only to be pulled up short by large blocks barring your path. Stab at these to make them disappear and write in if you can find out what the coloured blocks bearing a crescent rune do. No matter how many times I stabbed at them they wouldn't disappear. Yet they must be there for some reason.

That about sums it up. Lots of stabbing, an end of level monster with a real sting in its tail and some pretty poor animation. Better than the others this week but by no means brilliant.





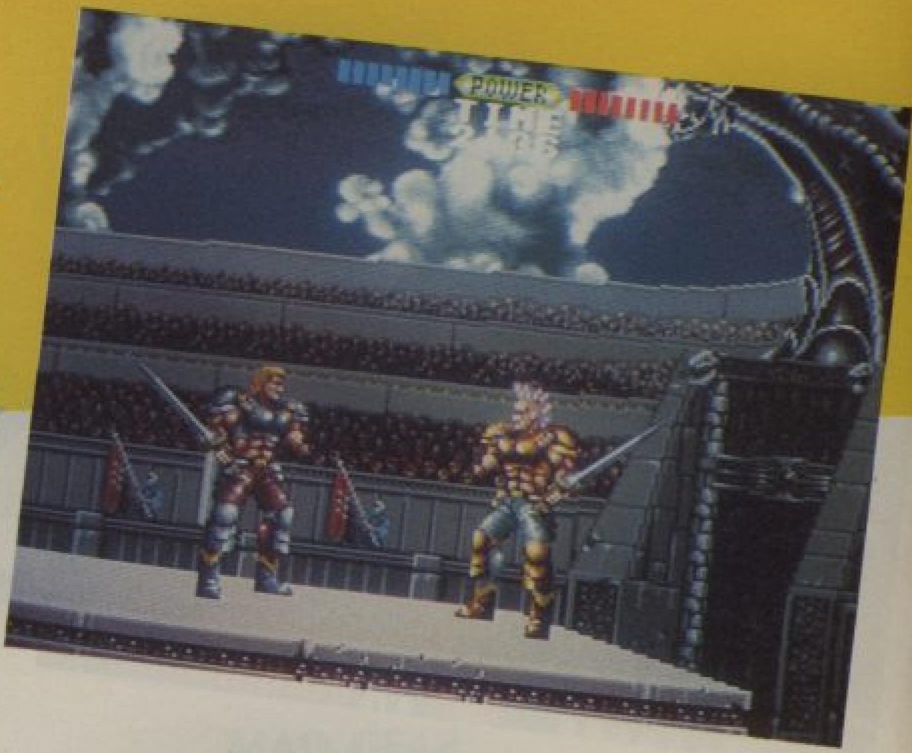
RAMBO III

Rambo III came as quite a surprise. It plays extremely like Cabal with a feel of Operation Wolf.

Rambo III is an optional two player game with Rambo and his mate. Standing with their backs to the screen they run sideways left and right blasting away at the enemy. The cursor, also controlled by the joystick can be moved up and down and left and right with your character.

As the enemy approaches from the distance, shoot out any stray soldiers, armoured carriers, motorcyclists, tanks and choppers. I must say, the enemy doesn't give you much chance of a breather. Pick-ups appear regularly

ACTION





which you must first shoot at and then run over to collect. These give you extra bullets, increased firepower and new more powerful weapons.

Once you've cleared the level of the enemy, you and your mate jump onto a motorbike and sidecar and jolt off into the distance. The next level sees even more being thrown at you.

Choppers and fighter jets must be blown out of the air as they speed towards you strafing the ground. They move fast and fixing the cursor on them can be quite tricky. The same goes for tanks which have an appalling tendency to mow you down.

Rambo III offers masses of action and needs fast reflexes if you're going to survive.

FIGHTING FANTASY

Recent coin-op releases haven't been exactly thrilling. The manufacturers seem to be churning out beat 'em up after beat 'em up — pretty awful quality ones at that.

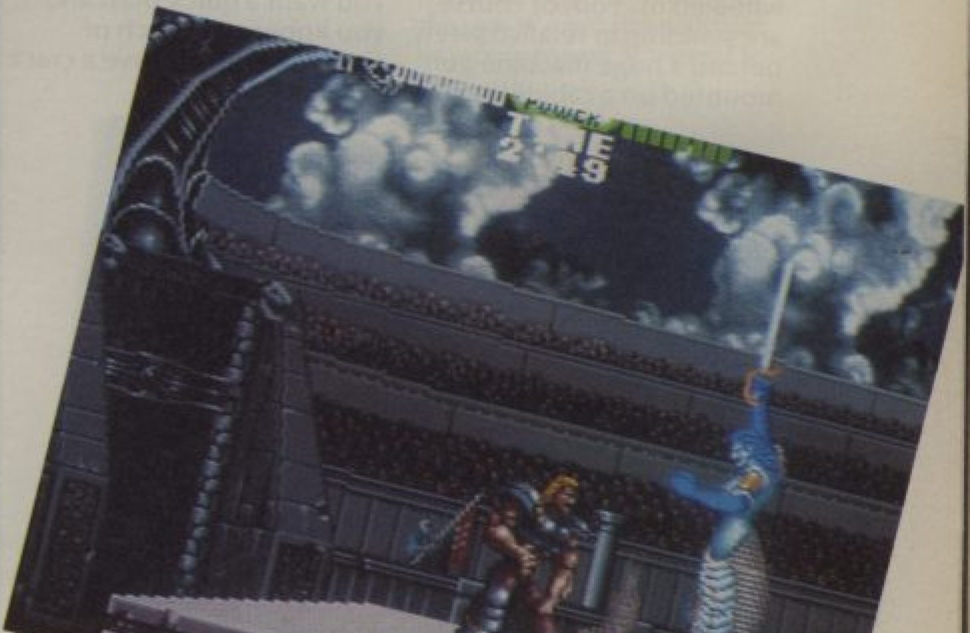
The latest in a long list is Data East's Fighting Fantasy which looks halfway interesting at first glance. However, I haven't come across anything as tasteless or as poor as this in terms of gameplay for quite some time.

First off you've got to select your opponent who might be a massive green scaly thug equipped with a deadly scimitar and shield for protection, an equally massive Mohican thug or a sinuous and perfectly deadly snake lady.

Now it's this last opponent that really made me mad. With only a few sword actions — swing or stab — coupled with crouch, jump and standing stances, how can you hope to kill someone who's attached to a twenty foot tail? Especially when that tail whips round your torso and gives you a quick squeeze. You've had it. Open your mouth to yell and blood spurts out. YUK!

In fact, your only hope is to jump over your opponents and try to stab them from behind. This would work if only the controls weren't so jerky and slow. Graphics look promising at first glance but the dull backgrounds let them down.

All in all I'd give this one a miss.



ARCADE



COUNTER FORCE

Operation Wolf, the all time success story, has spawned numerous lookalikes, and Jaleco has just entered the fray with Counter Force.

It's hard to say which is the better machine, both have well drawn graphics and hot, hot gameplay, but I think that Op Wolf and its sidekick Operation Thunderbolt have the leading edge. Taito was, after all, first with the idea.

Anyway, back to Counter Force — you can't go wrong playing this. There are five levels with a star setting from one to five. First level, first star, is the Menang Jungle where the action starts instantly.

Grenades are hurled at you, bullets are sprayed and even an anti-tank cannon is wheeled in. You, of course, are standing in relative safety behind a huge machine gun mounted on a cabinet.

Like Op Wolf, this is not just any old gun and has a sliding barrel mounting which launches a deadly stream of flame and grenades and even turns into a rocket launcher and laser gun.

To collect the bonus weapons, bullet proof jackets, food and water, just fire at the crates which swing slowly down by parachute. This exposes the object which has to be shot again to release it. A difficult job when the action is moving from left to right and you've a whole platoon trying to gun you down.

Both animation and graphics are excellent and the levels progress in difficulty and location. So if you want a quick blast and you know every inch of Operation Wolf, have a crack at this clone.

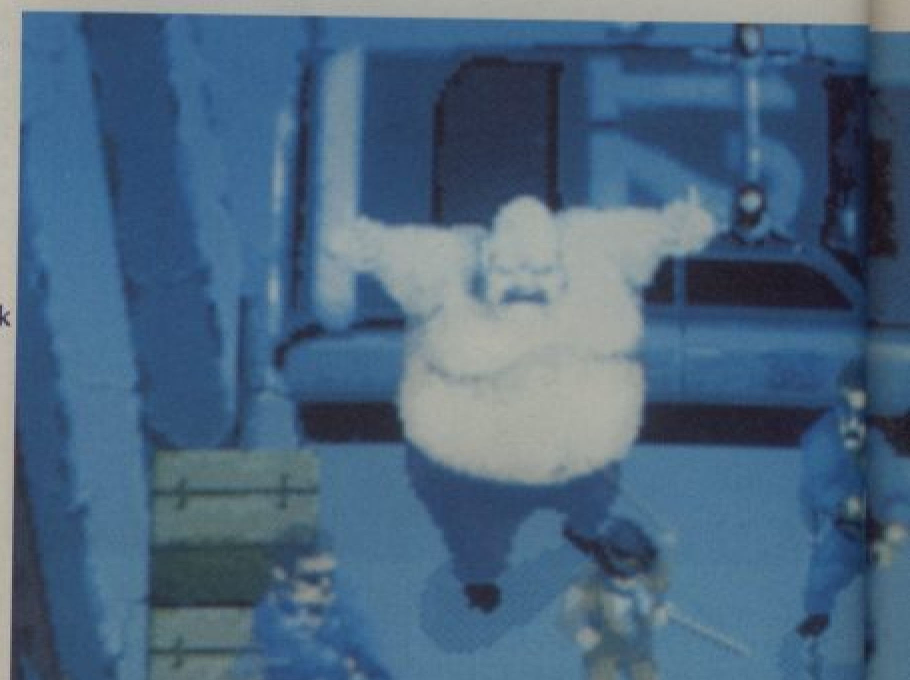


DOWN TOWN

Another thump 'em up to the slaughter is Down Town — the first time I've seen a game of this sort on a vertically scrolling background with a slight overhead view. It doesn't do much for the game though.

You're obviously an Up Town Boy who's wandered by mistake into Yobsville. And it doesn't take long to make you forget the nifty shirt and tie you're wearing. The thugs scent they're onto a good thing and attack immediately. With two yobs bearing down on you there's only one option — knee them in the groin and run.

However, they're quickly back on their feet and thirsting for your blood. In they stream and out pops your punishing left hook. Actually this is all fantasy. I found that with two against one you don't stand a chance, and are further hindered by the controls —



ACTION



twist for direction and push for move forward. Slow and cumbersome while in the meantime you're being clobbered.

Eventually the inevitable happens and down you go with blood splattering from your mouth. Just as tasteless as Fighting Fantasy though not as graphic.

The thugs have to be KO'd several times before they collapse permanently, arrows then point your direction deeper into the dingy streets for another bout with some butch women and more louts wielding an iron bar. Kicking the bar out of a lout's hands and knocking him out before he can crown you is your only hope. Unfortunately his friend quickly picks it up and bashes you round the lughole.

Fighting gun toting cops is your next step by which time your tie is seriously askew. It's down hill from now on boyo.

Down Town leaves me speechless.

MAD GEAR

Imagine racing swiftly up the screen, dodging other cars and trying not to get bumped into the side where you're left wheel-spinning in thin air with no sight of the ground below.

Well in Mad Gear from Capcom, this is an every day occurence. In fact Mad Gear can hardly be called a racing game. You start off pretty normally on the grid, but from then on things just don't go to plan.

For one thing you can take off. Just jump your car into the air and float over any obstacles like tyres, oil slicks and pile ups. The only problem is that flying really eats up your energy. And the only way to collect bonuses is by catching the fuel cans and bonus points while in the air. A Catch-22 situation really.

Helicopter blades can be picked up and these really whizz you over the trouble, though they don't last long. The track has an alarming tendency to break off just when you least expect it and arrows point the direction you should be steering to meet the next section of road. If you happen to jump at the wrong moment you've had it.

There are three choices of car — the F1 mean machine which is fast but suffers the most damage. A Porsche which is middle of the range and best bet for getting to grips with the game, and a convoy truck which takes the smooth with the rough, but boy is it slow when you need the speed.

I really enjoyed Mad Gear — it made a great change from the beat 'em ups and though it's not the ultimate in racing terms, it's great for a joy ride.



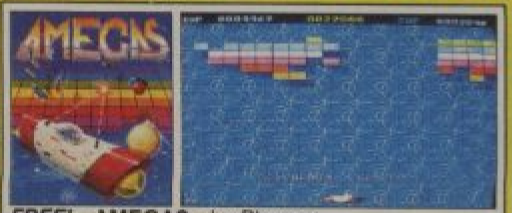







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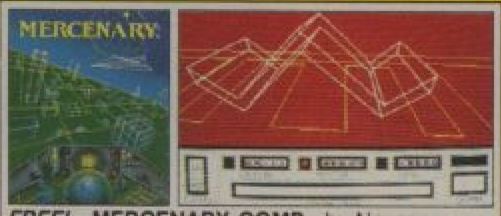
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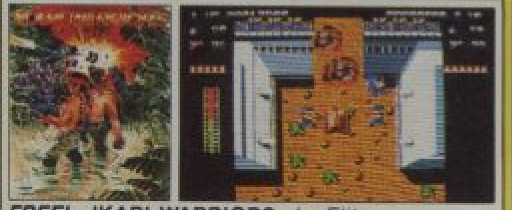
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AGM



Predator Power

Games Workshop has lined up a whole host of new releases for the summer period. Soon to be released are **Space Dwarves; Mercenaries of The 41st Millennium** a set of plastic miniature figures that complement their **Warhammer 40,000** range.

Talking of **Warhammer 40,000**, GW's next release in their vehicle series is an armoured fighting vehicle called the **Predator.** Based on the same chassis as **The Rhino** — their previous release in this series — **The Predator** comes with a large turret mounted auto-cannon and a pair of side mounted laser-cannons. Awesome!

D&D New Edition

Regular readers of the AGM page will be familiar with the fact that the biggest FRP game in the world — Advanced Dungeons and Dragons (AD+D) — has gone through a bit of an overhaul recently, as the full details were confirmed in the April edition of C+VG.

Although the revised AD+D system is bound to be welcomed by its many thousands of players, where does it leave the players of the basic and more simplified Dungeons and Dragons (D+D) game?

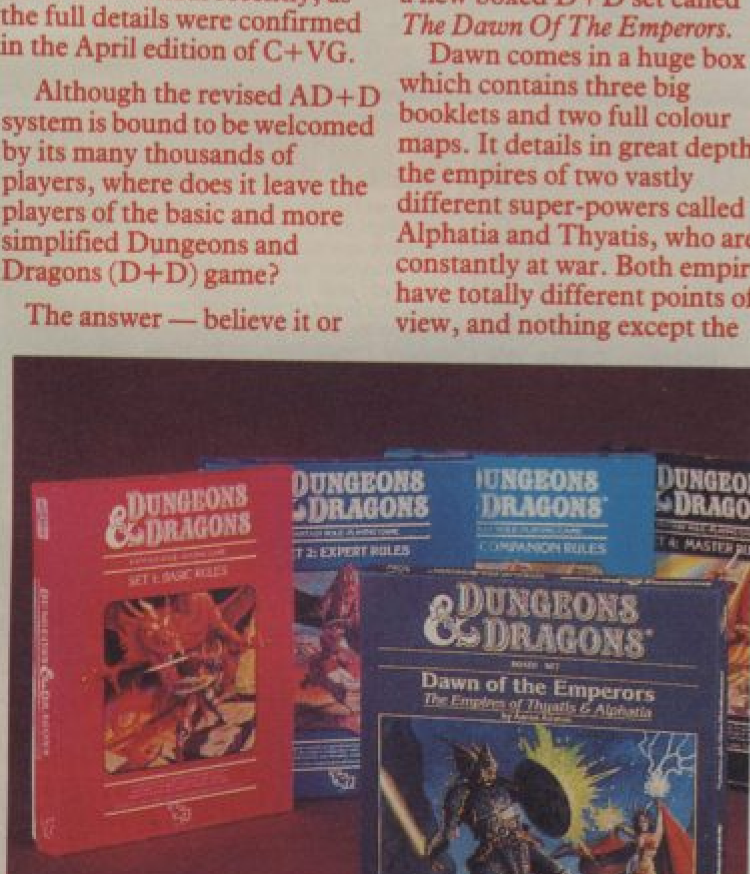
The answer — believe it or rot — is that basic D+D players are also in for something of a treat too. TSR are continuing to support the game that started the whole hobby 15 years ago by releasing a new boxed D+D set called *The Dawn Of The Emperors.*

Dawn comes in a huge box which contains three big booklets and two full colour maps. It details in great depth the empires of two vastly different super-powers called Alphatia and Thyatis, who are constantly at war. Both empires have totally different points of view, and nothing except the utter defeat of their opposing forces will satisfy them.

The first power detailed is that of Alphatia, the home of a nation of wizards who can tap into a source of massive magical power at will, while the second power to be described is Thyatis, a massive military state, whose powers of warfare have been honed into a frighteningly big, well oiled combat machine.

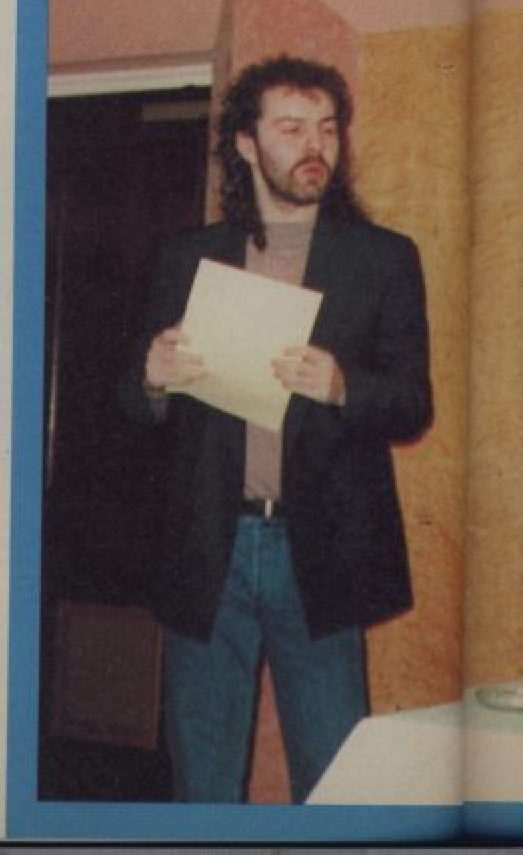
TSR are also releasing two **D+D Gazetteers**, which are called **The Golden Khan** and **The Republic Of Darokin**. Once again these deal with the powers behind two different nations in 96 page booklets. Ethengar is very similar to Ghengis Khan's Mongolia, where the inhabitants live only for warfare and excitement, while Darokin resembles Michelangelo's early Italy, where scientific study, an appreciation of the arts and etiquette are all important.

Next to be released is a new series of booklets called *The Creature Crucibles* covering the creation of such creatures as Dryads, Pixies and Sprites to name but a few and there is also a section dedicated to the use of the weird war machines which have been created by the likes of Kobolds, Gremlins and Trolls.



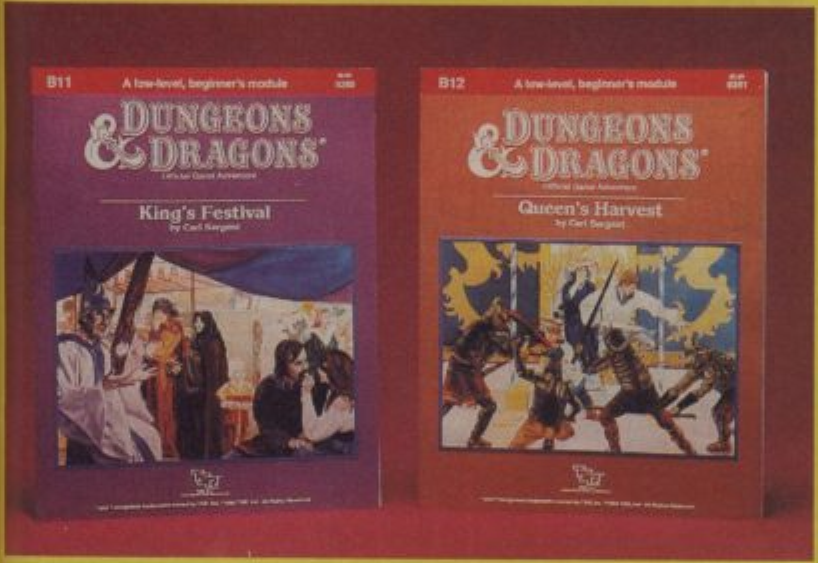
Golden

The Golden Chalice awards for the best adventures of 1988, were presented at a reception held at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street, on February 25th. The awards, voted for exclusively by the club's members, were presented by Dave Barker, Tony Bridge, Mike Gerrard, and the club's President Elect, Keith Campbell, under the chairmanship of organiser and



AD & D Made Easy

Kings Festival and **Queens Harvest** are two new TSR adventures which have been specifically designed to help players move up from basic D+ D to Advanced D+ D. Both adventures gently ease both the GM and the players into using the more complicated, but realistic, gaming procedures which allow for a better game overall. The ultimate aim is to make the transition between the games a much easier and more fluid affair, and having had a brief look at both scenarios, it looks like they may well work. **King** and **Queen** should be out around July for approximately £6.00.



n Chalice Winners

club director, Henry Mueller. The awards were as follows: Golden Chalice — Best Adventure: Ingrid's Back (Level 9). Silver Chalice — Runner up: Jinxter (Rainbird/Magnetic Scrolls). Bronze Chalice — 2nd Runner up: Legend Of The Sword (Rainbird/Silicon Soft). Commended: Beyond Zork (Activision/Infocom), Lancelot (Mandarin Software/Level 9). Golden Sword — Best Role Playing Game: Dungeonmaster (Mirrorsoft/FTL). Best Software House: Rainbird. Fellowship of the ACL: The Austin Family (this award is for exceptional services to the world of Adventure). Best Home Grown Adventure: Jekyll and Hyde (Essential Myth). Best Mail-order Software house: Zenobi Software.



Horror Goes RPG

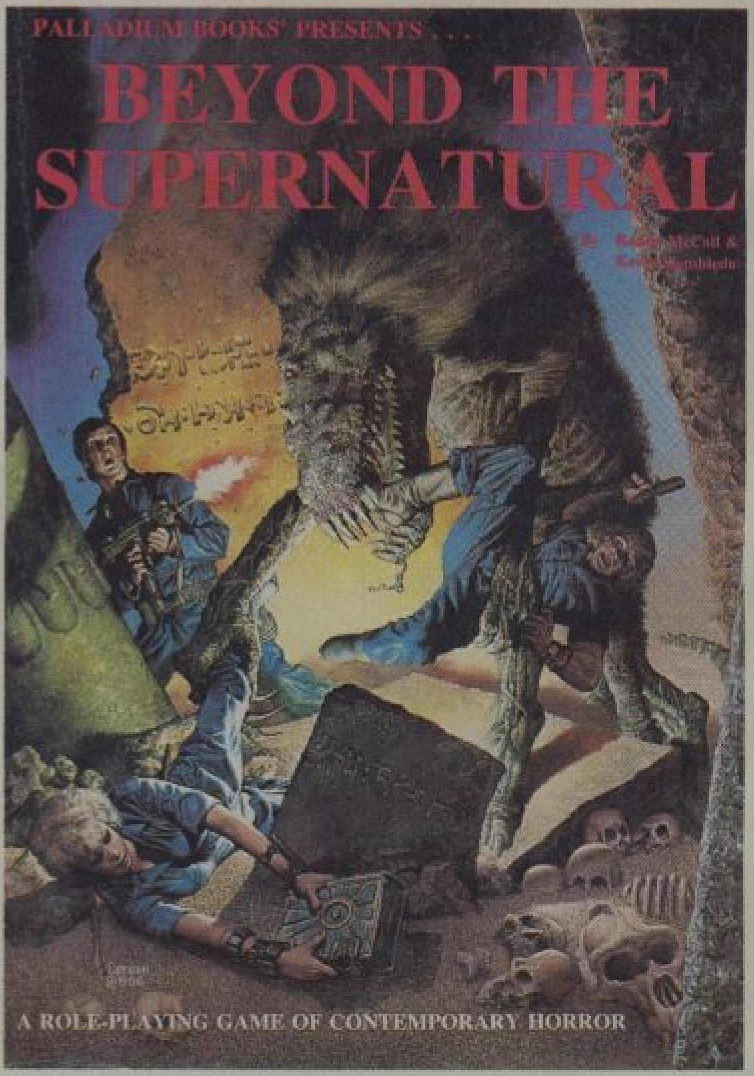
Beyond The Supernatural is a complete new gaming system which has recently been released by Palladium Books dealing specifically with the mysterious imaginary world of horror. Now you can play the character of someone like Indiana Jones, Sherlock Holmes, Van Helsing or Doc Savage and investigate weird, unexplored mysteries of the unexplained.

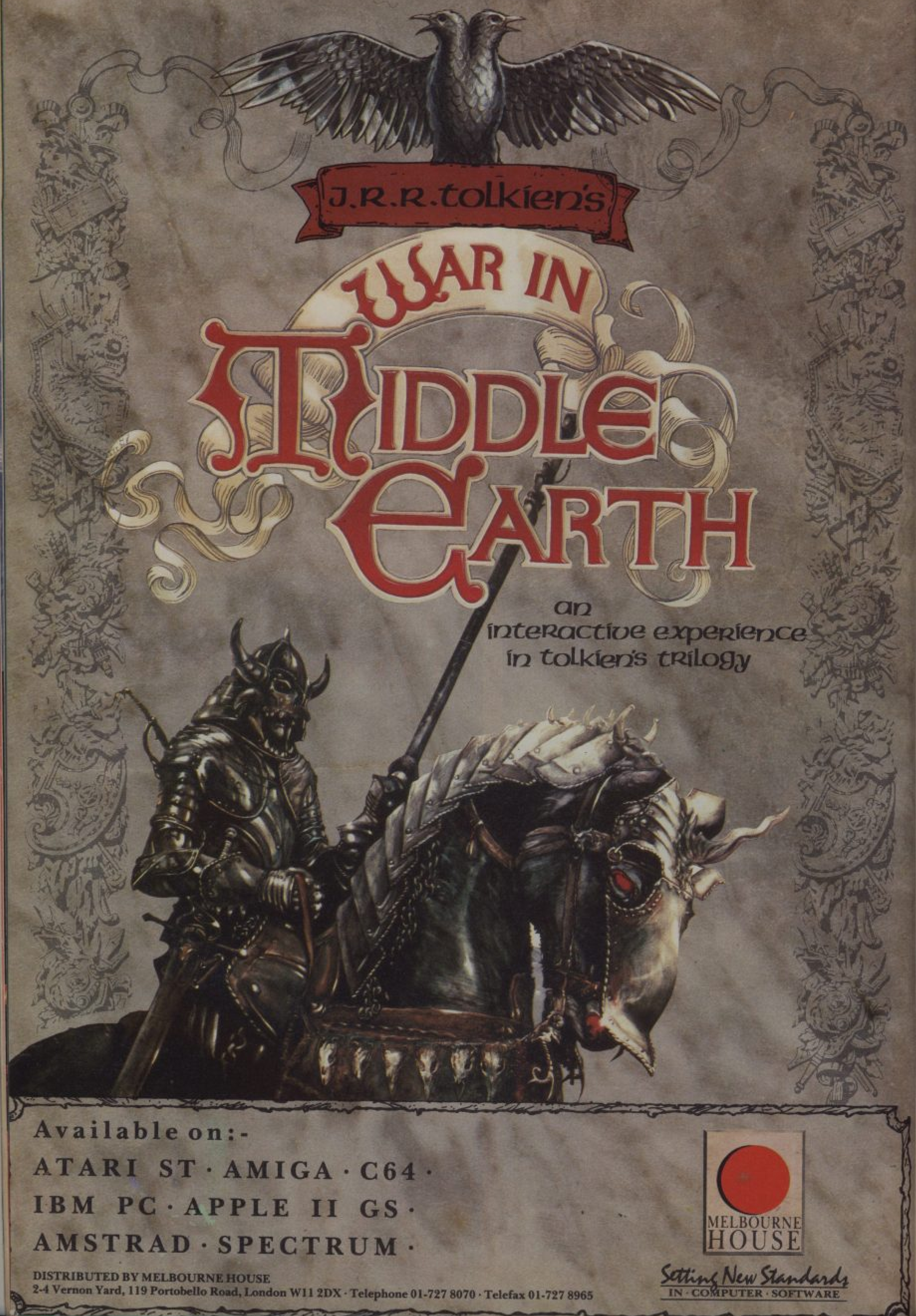
The game system is firmly rooted in the imaginary, turbulent, exciting world of strange happenings, where arcane powers and inhuman monsters are commonplace. To capture the illusion of reality the game designers —Randy Mcall and Kevin Siembieda — have used real places of mystery like Stonehenge and the Bermuda Triangle as adventure locations, which are ripe for exploration.

For example, in the games fictional world, the Bermuda Triangle is purported to be a dimensional gateway that allows supernatural beings access to earth and your character has to investigate this phenomenon, closing the gateway in the process.

Fictional entities like ghosts, vampires and poltergeists will be encountered, along with psychic powers like telekinesis, telepathy and premonition.

Beyond The Supernatural comes complete in a 255 page softback book, and all you need to play is a selection of various sided dice plus a pencil and paper. The game caters from anywhere between 2 to 10 — possibly more and sells for a very reasonable £11.50




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Setting New Standards
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In the early days of adventure games, the adventure land was pretty static, most problems being built around the manipulation of inanimate objects. Perhaps it was the Hobbit that first introduced characters that weren't completely wooden, and, as adventures developed, so came far more interaction between the player and fictional characters in the games. Nowadays, Infocom, Magnetic Scrolls, and Level 9, all support speech within their games. This is no easy task, for it is difficult enough to devise a parser of complex sentences which are structured according to playing rules. Once those inverted commas are opened, the player can, in theory, say anything to the person he is addressing.

The trick in implementing such a system lies in a compromise between limiting speech to a highly structured form (eg. TALK TO someone ABOUT something) in which key words often trigger off a helpful response not entirely deserved, and a freer system which accepts anything, but gives cleverly evasive answers to irrelevant conversation.

Two adventurers are stuck this month with such communications difficulties. Peter Nuttall of Belfast is having an affair with Infogramme's "L'affaire". People are speaking to him all right — it's just that he is at a loss to know how to answer their questions! In French, presumably, 'nuff said.

Meanwhile, Mik Brookes of Tipton, has discovered that an advanced parser is unlikely to be encountered in a budget adventure. Mik is finding great difficulty in getting through to characters within Werewolf Simulator. Who has had a go at this game? Not me — Top Ten didn't send me a copy. Which was probably just as well, for Mik adds: "I know the game is budget but is, I think it is below budget standard." He wrote to Chiltern Enterprise Centre for some help on how to communicate, how to use any of the apparently useless objects he has collected, and how to get into the police cells, but it seems they were not enterprising enough to reply. So who can bail out Top Ten and CEC with some tips for Mik?

"What's this I hear being bandied about the computer shops that new Infocom titles won't be released over here on the ST?" asks Andrew Bethell. 'Fraid it's looking like more than a mere rumour, Andrew — and not only the UK. It appears Infocom have not produced an ST interpreter for their new system, and may never do so . . . So if Beyond Zork is going to be Andrew's last Infocom game, who can help him complete it with some info on how to get the helmet?

It's no headwear, but ladies unerwear that's giving D. Bijl of Gravendeel in Holland, a bit of bother! He is in a room with a hooker, and needs a rope. But if he tries to take it, he is told that her underwear will fall down! But before you get excited about this, I will add what DB didn't say — it's hanging up to dry on a washing line! This is from Leisure Suit Larry In The Land Of The Lounged Lizards, of course! Look in the clues section for what to do about it! DB is also having difficulty paying a wine bill, rather tiresome, because once she gets him into the honeymoon suite, Fawn ties him up and goes away, in retribution for having had to pay the bill herself. What a waste of facilities . . .!

Calling all gardeners! If you've bee anywhere near Realm Four in Bard's Tale III, recently, you might come across Paul McLean of Queensland, staring at some roses. He has given Aliria four roses of different hues, but now Alliria is demanding the Rose Of Allirira. Paul can see some more roses on a wall, but he can't get them.

Be warned — there's a red mist in the Knowledge Portal this month! Mark, of Belfast should know — he's trying to Get through it in Kobyashi Naru, and with little success! Also, can anyone tell Mark how to use the fungus?

Vladimir Pavlovic has Moriarty beaten in Infocom's Sherlock Holmes and the Quest for the Crown Jewels, but finds he cannot get to the palace in time, on foot. He has tried ordering a cabbie to wait for him for seven hours at the bridge, but the cabby got tired of waiting after an hour or so, and drives off. Can he get Wiggins to keep the cab for him, or should he hail one, somehow?

This month's free subscription to the Adventurer's Club Ltd., goes to Allen and Mark Errington from Durham, a couple of adventurers who send in regular updates of their progress in epics such as Deja Vu, Uninvited, and more recently, Chrono Quest. This month they comment that Chrono Quest has the best graphics they have seen in any adventure to date, although they think that the gameplay should be improved for ay sequel, such as better cursor positioning to identify items, dropping of objects, and less being 'killed off'. Meanwhile, having finished Deja Vu, they have a suspicion that the solution may be slightly different between the Amiga and ST versions. Has anyone out there played both? Thanks, you two, for al your help, and long may you continue to supply C+VG, adventurers with your clues!

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Helpline

Clues

ADVENTURE CLUES

SHARD OF INOVAR:
Put the statuette in the font to release the Aulet from the aura of fire.

FRANKENSTEIN:
In the ice labyrinth, go N,H,S,W, and cut ice with pick. Move up, and continue cutting, taking a rest now and again.

HITCH HIKER'S GUIDE:
To get the plotter, first get the Babel Fish, then listen carefully and appreciatively to the Captain's poetry.

LARRY 1:
Forget the washing line. Remove protective clothing and make yourself scarce through the window!

LARRY 2:
Take the ticket to the studios, and cheat!

AGM

KINGS



▲ *Kings Quest — adventure and arcade.*

▶ ACTIVISION/SIERRA ON-LINE IBM PC; ATARI ST; £29.99
▶ AMIGA VERSION TO FOLLOW
▶ NOTE: ATARI ST VERSION REQUIRES DOUBLE SIDED DRIVE
▶ VERSION REVIEWED: ATARI ST
▶ REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL

Since the death of King Edward, King Graham has ruled Daventry (imagine a nicer, more fantasy-like one) for many years, during which time it has prospered. He has two fine heirs to succeed him to the throne, twins Alexander and Rosella. The king falls ill, and Rosella weeps for him.

Suddenly, the good fairy Genesta appears in the king's magic mirror, and bids Rosella to come to Tamir, where there is a charmed fruit that could save her father's life. Of course, it's not quite as simple as that, for in return, Genesta asks that Rosella retrieve her magic talisman from the evil Lolotte. Without it, her magic powers are rapidly fading, and she fears for her own life in the very near future.

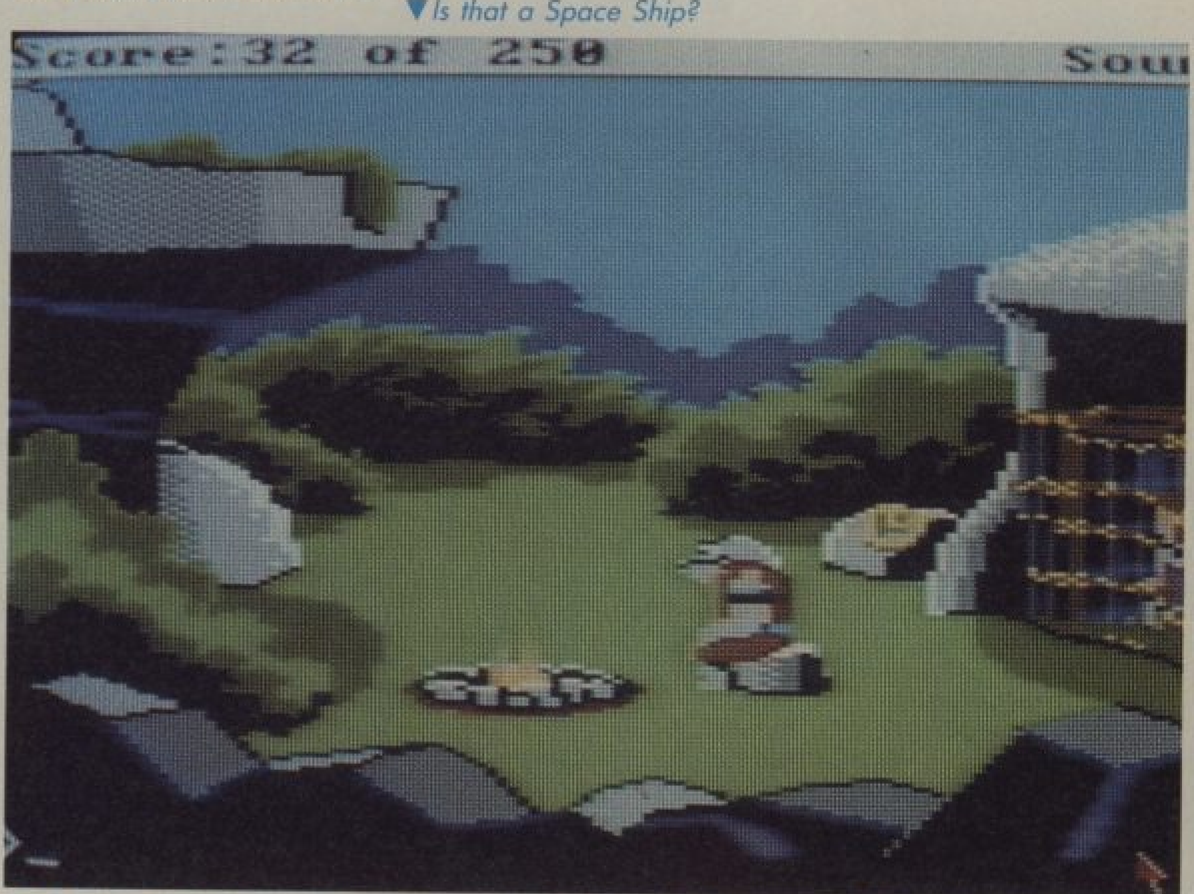
Thus Rosella sets out on these two quests from a deserted beach in Tamir, disguised as a peasant girl, and with just twenty four hours to achieve her two goals.

First she must explore the land, which she finds to her delight is populated with Pan, seven dwarfs, Cupid, and a unicorn, as well as numerous birds. It is a truly beautiful world, with a sparkling stream running from the bottom of a waterfall, through meadows and forests, into the seas. But there is evil afoot, from the merciless Lolotte, resident of the mountain-top castle, and from a troll, always on the lookout for a nourishing meal of human being. There is also a particularly nasty breed of trees in the forest . . .

Rosella's adventures take her into the house of the seven dwarves (even untidier than KC's! True! — Ed), inside a diamond mine, and into a strangely derelict and deserted house, in the middle of a cemetery. Here she discovers a secret organ loft, isolated from the rest of the house. There is something strange, too, about the organ. Its long pipes are on the right — the treble end of the keyboard — yet the long pipes produce the bass notes. Is this artistic licence, or is the fact significant? For this truly mysterious organ seems to have no purpose save to play music . . .

How can Rosella get near the nervous unicorn, who gracefully runs away whenever she appears? How can she get near enough to kiss the crown-wearing frog on the lily pad? Has Pan got a dark secret, or is he just a harmless flute-playing pest? And why is

▼ *Is that a Space Ship?*

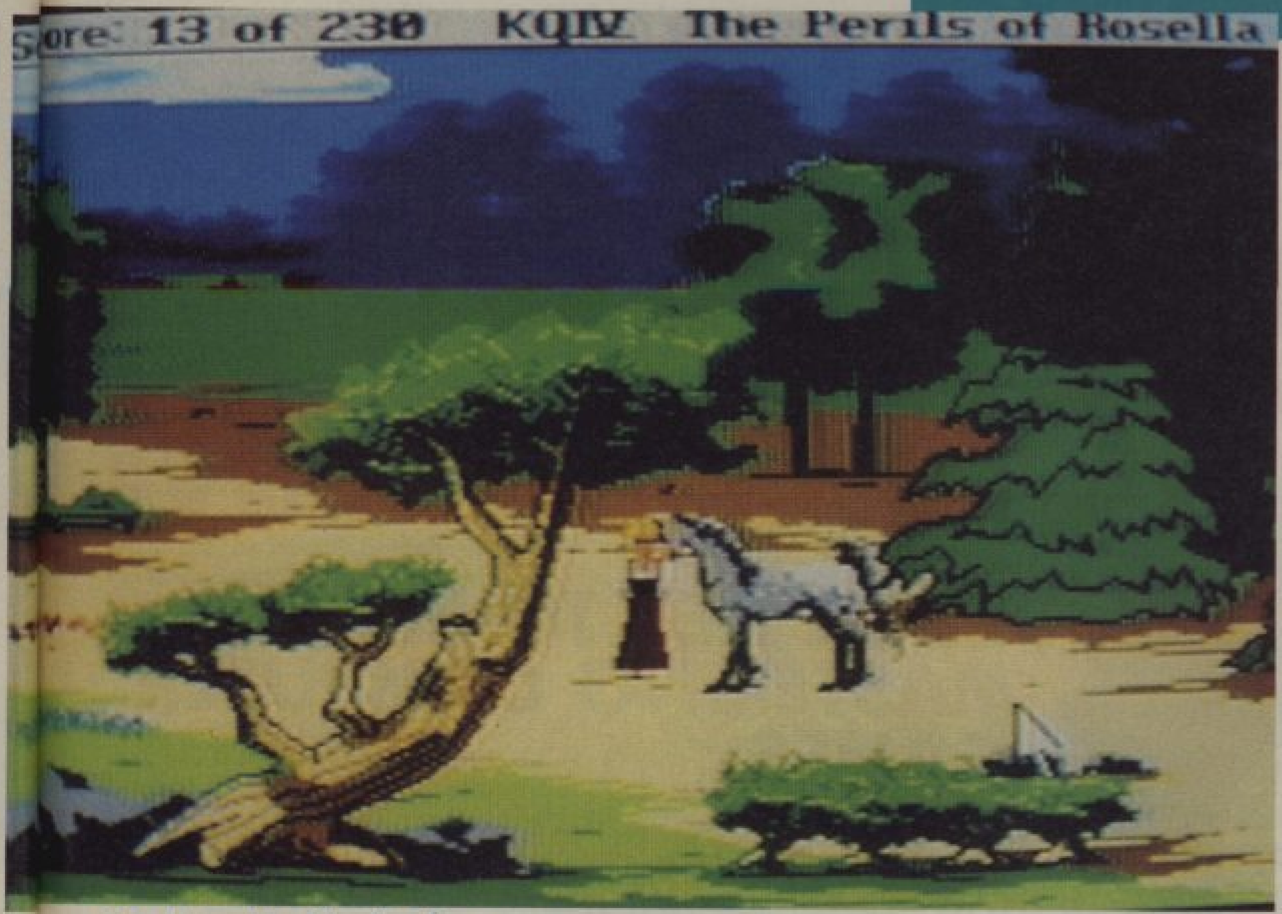


the fisherman's wife so surly, when all Rosella wants is to be friendly?

These are just some of the questions and puzzles you will be mulling over when you play King's Quest IV. And you can see it all in glorious colour, hear the music, and follow the movements! Watch the seven dwarfs as they file indoors for their lunchtime soup! See Cupid fly off in embarrassment when caught bathing! Hear the dreaded troll as he approaches! And read the finest collection of tombstone epitaphs you're likely to come across in a computer game!

This is surely the most advanced animated adventure yet from Sierra. Produced using its new adventure system, it comes on four double sided ST disks, or, on the PC version, a fantastic nine 5.25 inch disks! The graphics and animation are superb. Birds fly through the forest, water rushes over rocky outcrops in the stream, smoke rises from chimneys, and Rosella sways her hips as she walks through it all.

And as ever, Sierra has included a few tortuous arcade challenges to frustrate the adventurer! An unguarded spiral staircase, viewed from underneath, has Rosella disappearing from sight as she ascends it. Cursor keys become reversed as the player starts to guide her from below. A touch too long on the wrong key, and she will plummet to her

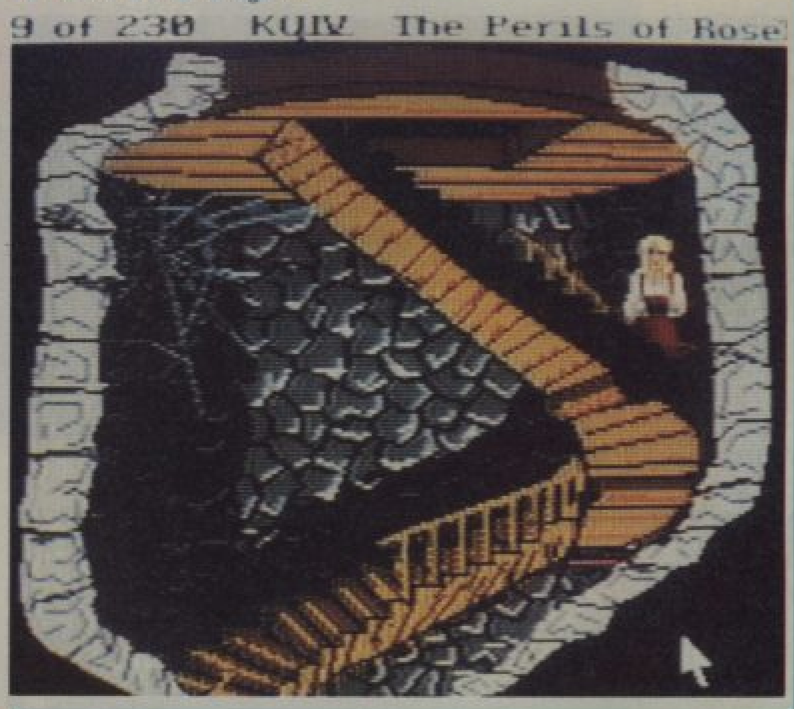


▲A Horse, My Kingdom for a . . .

QUEST IV

▼ Superb animation from Sierra. ▼Where is that Organ?





death! It's all the more painful when you actually watch her journey to the floor!

As well as automatic sequences of animated narration, triggered off by the player's actions, there are plenty of puzzles to get to grips with, and the adventurer must keep his eyes open for visual clues, or he may well miss an all important object.

The game does not play the same every time, for some events occur at random, such as the appearance of the unicorn, and Cupid's dip in the local swimming pool. Patience, and a few revisits may therefore be necessary to get the desired outcome when you think you know what you must do.

When King's Quest I first appeared, the novelty of its animation system was one of its main attractions. Sierra has not stood still since then, and, whilst continuing the same background theme in subsequent King's Quests, it has steadily improved its techniques and tricks, to produce this, King's Quest IV, which I rank as its finest game to date.

RATINGS

▶ VOCABULARY	87%
▶ GRAPHICS	95%
▶ PLAYABILITY	90%
▶ VALUE	88%
▶ **OVERALL**	**91%**

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Good news for PBM'ers everywhere! Two major PBM conventions have been announced recently and C+VG readers are entitled to big discounts on admission. Furthermore DMC Games, who run one of the best hand moderated games around has gone through a massive re-launch. C+VG's Wayne supplies you with the latest PBM news . . .

At last!! The British Play By Mail Association (BPMA) has finally announced the date and venue for the **Fourth British PBM Convention.** Mike McGarry, the organisation's Treasurer and Convention Organiser recently confirmed that the event will take place at the University Of London, 20 Bedford Way, Euston, London, WC1H OAL on June 3rd 1989.

Several companies have already confirmed that they are going to attend. These include KJC Games, Sloth Enterprises, NAB Software, Mystery And Adventure games, and Rhann Games.

This is your chance to attend the UK's premier independent PBM convention, meet the people behind the games you play and chat to them. More than 1500 players are expected to attend throughout the day and this is the perfect chance to meet your postal friends — and enemies!!

The BPMA chose the University of London, for its professionally run catering facilities, expansive "Chatting" area, and for the ease with which it can be reached by people arriving in and travelling from London, as Euston Station is less than 3 minutes away.

Apart from the usual PBM lectures, competitions and prestigious PBM awards, there will be other Fantasy Role Playing events, including a stall selling a complete range of state of the art FRP material, demonstrations and participation of Live Role Playing by The Labyrinthe, an open AD+D competition, a fanzine stall, a bring and buy auction plus computer games competitions.

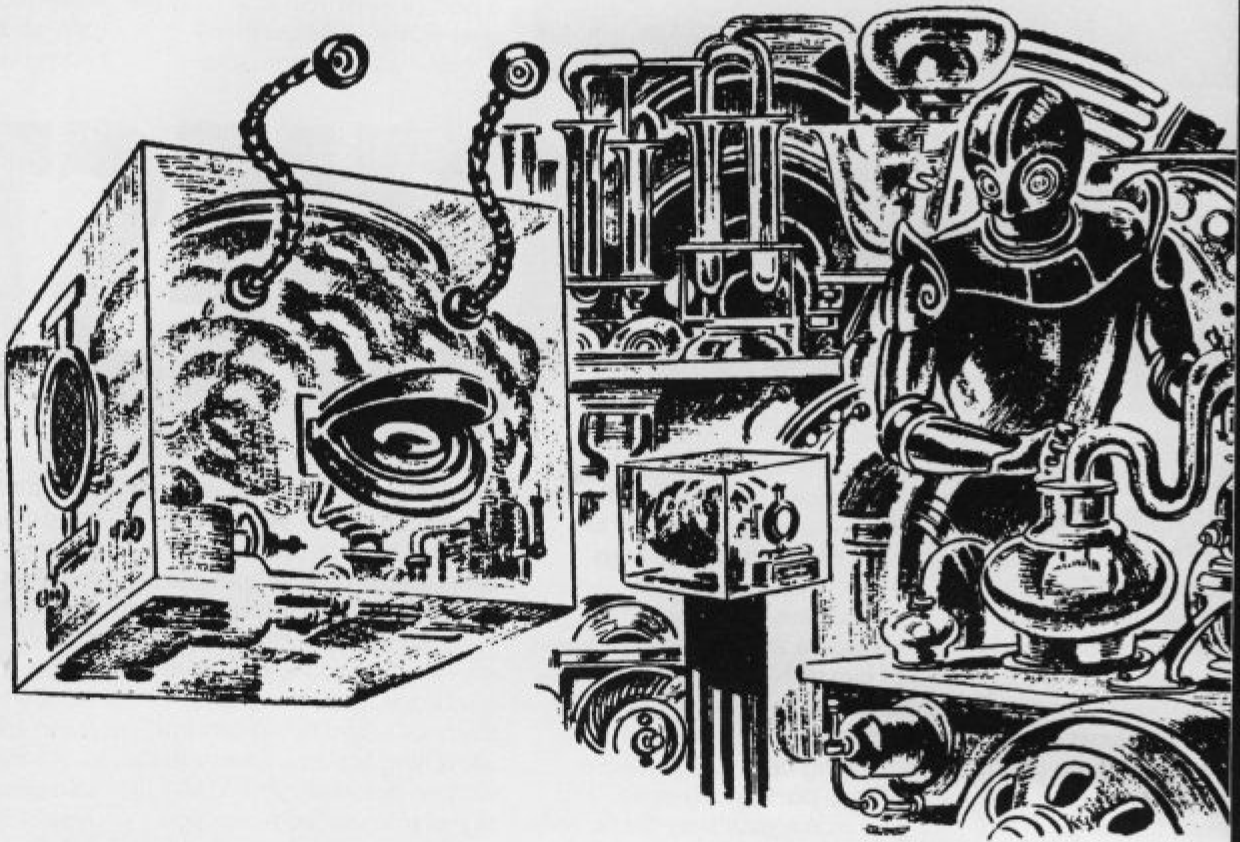
The convention will start at 10.30 and finish at 5.30 pm. Tickets will be £3.00 on the door, but C+VG readers can get them for £2.00 in advance, by applying to the PBMA direct, enclosing proof of purchase of C+VG. The address is Mike McGarry, C/O The BPMA, 55 Eden Rd, Walthamstow, London, E17. It is advisable to book early, as an advance ticket will not only guarantee you entry, but will also save you having to queue up on the day.

The Great Northern PBM Convention has been arranged for 14 October 1989. The prices — including the discounts to C+VG readers — and times are the same as the Fourth BPMA convention, however the events are scaled down quite a bit and the whole event is run on a much more low key basis.

Dave Cooksey, the man behind **The Hunting,** is soon to unleash a new game called **The Hunting II — The Aftermath.** For the record, the original game was set in a place called Endlethorn, a city turned into a prison for the confinement of criminals after a nuclear war had taken place.

Endlethorn was surrounded by huge walls — over 200ft high and 100ft thick — and was patrolled by the 'exterminators', who enforced whatever law existed in the city. An exterminator's aim was to seek out and destroy any named criminal.

This situation remained the same for 20 years until the criminals managed to breach the city walls and escape. Now the criminals are all over the planet, and this is where **The Hunting II** begins. The year is 2014 and the planet is in a bad way. Violence is everywhere and it is a case of survival of the fittest, be it mental or physical.



In this hand moderated game, you can choose to play either an exterminator or a criminal. Your immediate aim is survival, and this is no easy thing today. However, if you do manage to survive you could try to make something of yourself and get on the fame table.

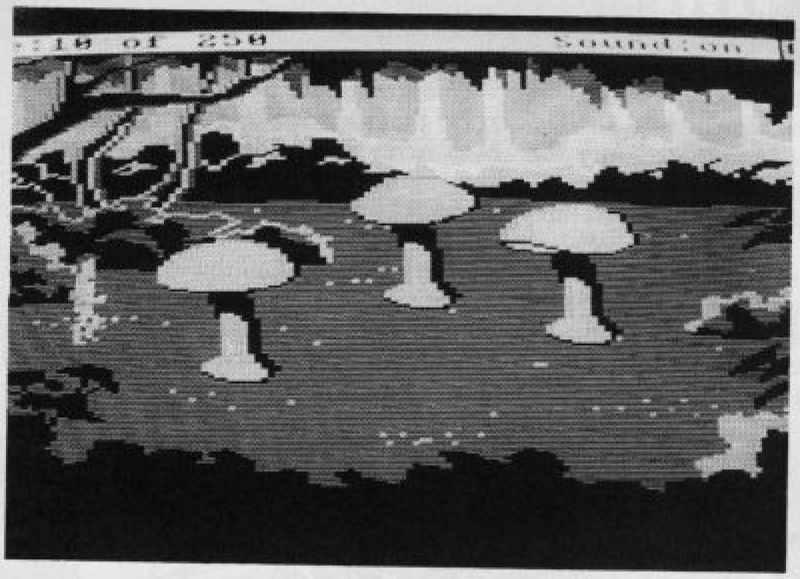
I played the original Hunting for over 2 years, and throughout that time found it the most interesting and consistent of PBM's.

The Hunting II is limited to 100 players and positions in the game will be very hard to come by.

The start up fee is £10.00. I know that sounds a bit steep, but when you consider that for your money you receive a new, comprehensive A4 20 page rulebook, a 32 page source book which details all the planet's cities, organisations, major NPC's, available weapons and equipment, plus set up, character sheet and two free turns, you can see that you get quite a bit for your dosh.

Interested parties should make all cheques and P/Os payable to Dave Cooksey and send them to **DMC games, 2 Pemerton Rd, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 2LW.** Future turns cost £2.00. People of high moral values or certain religious beliefs should note that this game contains elements that may offend or challenge their beliefs.

If you like films such as the Mad Max series, Escape from New York, The Predator, The Thing and BladeRunner, this game is definitely for you and you'll kick yourself if you miss this one off chance to join it!! Consider yourself warned.



SPACE QUEST 2

► **SIERRA ON-LINE**
► **REVIEWER: KEITH CAMPBELL**

Amiga versions of Sierra's 3D animated adventures are usually released quite some time after both PC and ST versions. Recently released is Amiga Space Quest 2, already around for some time on the other formats.

Loosely a follow-on from SQ1, you have now been promoted to chief janitor aboard the space station Xenon 4 (shades of Planetfall!) After a somewhat cinematic opening. The game itself starts off with you sweeping the station decks — clearing the space dust, I suppose? Soon, your wrist TV communicator starts to beep, and you are ordered to report for special duty.

As you move towards the airlock door, Sierra's animation shows off a little, by allowing your character to walk on walls and ceilings (being in a zero gravity environment) cleverly changing the perspective view of him as he moves from plane to plane through right angles.

Assigned the sickly task of cleaning up a space shuttle after a particularly rough trip, you make your way there, only to get mugged. You regain consciousness in the presence of the evil Sludge Vorhaul. Peeved at you thwarting his plans in SQ1 (you did, I take it?) he announces you are condemned to hard labour in the mines for the rest of your life, whilst he, Sludge, will conquer the earth by infesting it with thousands of genetically engineered door-to-door salesmen.

With that you are transported to the planet on which you are doomed to spend the rest of your days. Unfortunately for Sludge's guards, the hover-platform on which you are being taken to the mines run out of fuel in mid-hover — and it very soon ceases to be one! Being the sole survivor of the inevitable impact, you find yourself alone in a forest clearing. Or was that a pair of eyes you saw peering over that hedge just then?

Now is your chance to escape! But as if the problems of battling with a very sensitive root-monster in an arcade-like don't-tread-on-the-lines maze, dodging swamp monsters, and crossing the odd chasm here and there aren't enough, you also have to contend with Vorhaul's men flying around searching for you. Seems there was an automatic MAYDAY signal transmitted when you crashed — and if big V's lot spot you, you can forget anything as pleasant as working in a mine — it's ZAPPO!

Whilst the problems are not mind-boggling, some of them are extremely obscure. That in itself would be OK if there were sufficient cryptic hints in the text to gently edge the player in the right direction.

Here's an example of what I mean. Having reached a dark cave system, and suffered a few painful deaths whilst attempting to negotiate it, I decided I could really do with a good old fashioned brass lantern. I therefore cheated, courtesy of a C+VG reader who had sent in a few clues, and discovered that what I needed was a gem. Now the reader in question had obviously not thought the whereabouts of the said gem to be a problem, for its location was not mentioned. So I started back at square one, meticulously opening everything openable, and examining everything examinable. Still no sign of a gem.

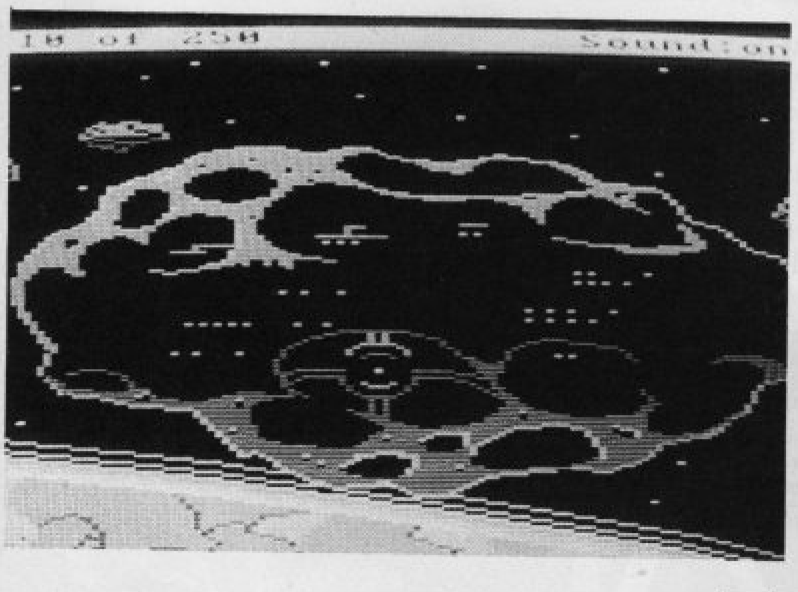
The trouble is, the game's vocabulary is rather limited, and the replies are not designed to give that little bit of help and encouragement by hinting when you're on the right track. Still languishing in the dark, my suspicions focus on an apparently empty mailbox, whose tray I cannot visualise, and a growth of killer mushrooms, that appears to be nothing more sinister than a booby trap. But I can't do a thing with them.

All this searching and sweating is not helped by the frailty of the program, which has the propensity to lock up without warning when your character attempts to cross certain screen boundaries. I assume this bug to be specific to the Amiga version rather than to the game itself, for although I have not played SQ2 on ST or PC, I have not found any previous ST games from Sierra to suffer a similar problem.

All in all this rather spoils what is, mostly, an interesting and exciting adventure. Or it would be if I could find that @**** gem!

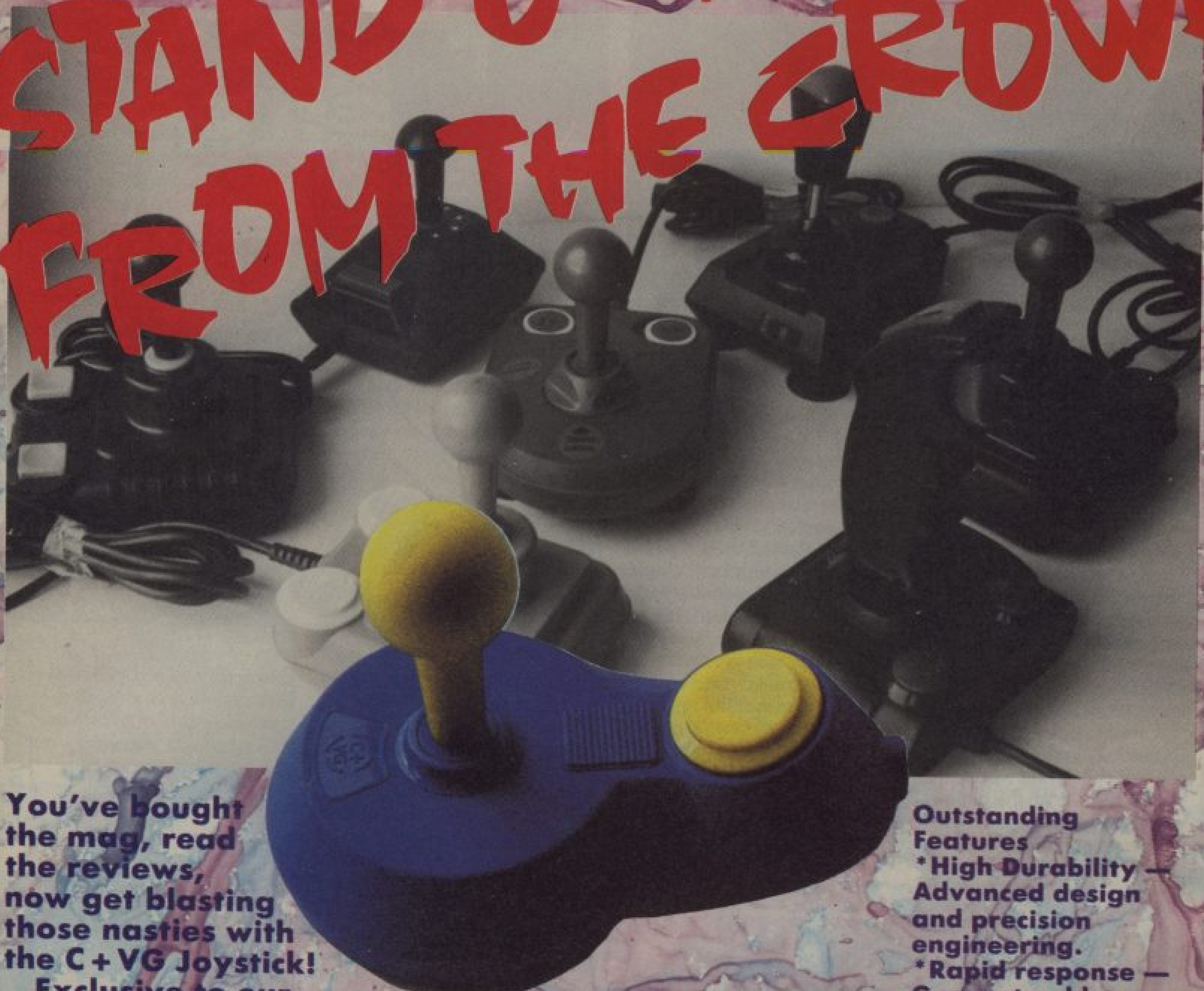
AMIGA

► VOCABULARY	61%
► GRAPHICS	67%
► PLAYABILITY	50%
► VALUE	41%
► **OVERALL**	**69%**



AGM

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NINJAS AND SUPERSPIES



▲ *Ninjas — expells many myths.*

Over the years the whole history of the Ninja has been distorted by such a degree, that the legends that now surround them are wildly inaccurate. There are currently many role playing systems on the market that deal with the subjects of Ninjas and most of them try to accurately re-create many of the supposed skills Ninja's are reported to have perfected. This usually leads to a mass of combat charts and weapons tables from which the players have to decipher a mass of mathematical formulae — the likes of which would make even the most experienced role player wince!

There is a fair amount of tables and lists to be found in **Ninjas And Superspies,** but the game is not as complex as some I could mention! In fact **Ninjas** is a complete role playing system in its own right and it deals with the murky, double crossing world of secret agents, as well as the mystic, oriental skills of martial artists.

Initially you have to create a character and this is done by rolling three six sided dice that you will have to buy, as they are not included with the game. Once you have rolled these three dice eight times, you have to allocate each of the results to a specific character skill. There are eight in total and they range from Mental Endurance to Physical Strength.

Then, using the rules as a guideline, you allocate your character an Occupational Character Class, choose a specific martial arts form or specific power you want your character to have, and calculate how much damage your character can take.

Finally, you allocate your character a detailed



▼ack



▲ *Kislev — supportive material for Warhammer.*

SOMETH

▶ PRODUCT: SOMETHING ROTTEN IN KISLEV
▶ PUBLISHED BY: GAMES WORKSHOP
▶ PRICE: £10.99
▶ REVIEWER: WAYNE

It's been just over 3 years since the *Warhammer Fantasy Role Play* rules were released — and to stimulate continuing interest GW have released a series of supportive hardback campaign modules which go under the series title of *The Enemy Within.*

Something Rotten In Kislev is the follow up to the first release in the series called *Power Behind The Throne.*

The 146 page book is divided into three separate adventures, namely The Beast Child, Death Takes A Holiday and The Champions Of Death. Each adventure is written in such a way that by finishing one, the players will automatically find themselves starting another. However, if a GM wishes, the adventures can be divided up into three separate scenarios, which can be run in any order the GM sees fit.

Furthermore the GM may choose to ignore ALL the suggested adventures and use the book background for an ongoing campaign.

The empire is divided up into three major areas; the forest, the mountains and the steppes and the monsters that inhabit these regions are surprisingly rare. Mind you, the natural wildlife more than makes up for the lack of them, as packs of wolves roam the countryside.

Although they are supposed to be taken seriously, the three adventures are written with just the right amount of humour to entertain all concerned.

Take *The Beast Child* for example. The player is initially thrown in jail on some totally fictitious charge and, whilst contemplating what to do next, a very arrogant and well armoured high ranking military figure enters the cells.

The next thing you know you are being conscripted into the King's most elite fighting regiment, the Knights Panthers. After a while things aren't too bad. You get fed regularly, a wide range of armour and weapons is made available to you totally free of charge and you even get presented with a free horse!!

The second adventure, Death Takes A Holiday, places the intrepid band of adventurers on an information gathering mission. All they have to do is enter a small town, speak to a friendly



background — including personality, equipment held and any peculiarities it may have — and you are ready to play!! It may sound difficult and complex, but believe me it isn't! I played the game with a group of players who had never played a role playing game before and they got to grips with the character generation system within half an hour.

Players can choose to become five basic types of character: Martial Artists, Espionage Agents, Free Agents, Mercenaries and Gizmoteer. Each character type has its own specialist skills, which balance each other out.

For example Martial Artists get immense superhuman powers and can perform incredible feats such as becoming invisible, turning their body into stone, and killing an opponent outright with one solitary blow. If you add all these innate powers to a martial artists highly developed fighting skills, you would initially think that the poor old superspy is not so super after all!!

However, when you read the superspies section you realise that they are equally — or in some cases more — equipped to deal with their opponents. Basically, whatever the superspy loses out to in personal skills, it makes up for with gadgetry and scientific technology.

Superspies are entitled to use Cybernetics, which means that their body can be especially adapted to use specialised superpowered replacement body parts. The advantages of Cybernetics are twofold; Many of the body parts are interchangeable, allowing a character to unplug one device and insert another, and the smaller cybernetic devices can be implanted into a normal human being without doing any long term permanent damage.

The bionic devices available range from a replacement eye — which will allow the character to perform various functions such as see in the dark and enlarge specific images — to a motorized leg, which drastically increases a character's movement capacity.

Furthermore, Superspies can use special spy weapons, which can have devastating — and lethal — effects. These range from powerful miniature hand guns to suits of specialized armour, which can absorb almost everything that is thrown at it, and still give the Superspy total freedom of movement.

Of course, combat is the name of the game, and a huge section of the booklet is dedicated specifically to this event. The information on combat procedure covers hand to hand fighting, the usage of modern weapons such as pistols, rifles, grenades, etc, vehicle combat — which includes all kinds of car, boat and space craft — as well as the use of a frightening array of oriental weapons.

Overall the combat system is fairly easy to use, and if you follow the step by step instructions given in the boklet, you won't go far wrong. More to the point, combat can be resolved quickly, without excessive use of the combat tables.

The final part of **Ninja** is devoted to tips for the Games Master and possible adventures they may wish to run. The tips given allow the GM to make their game a more believable and interesting affair, providing for more in-depth gameplay in the process.

Overall **Ninja's** is well illustrated, fairly simple to play and will be of great interest to readers who wish to re-create situations from films like **Big Trouble In Little China, Enter The Dragon** or **The Last Ninja** The minus points are that the information needed to play the game tends to be scattered about the book, the text is written in a somewhat dry fashion and the continual description of the 27 martial arts rapidly becomes very tedious. That said, if you are a Bruce Lee fan, this game should be right up your street!

- ▶ VALUE 70%
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 70%
- ▶ COMPLEXITY 63%
- ▶ DESIGN 65%
- ▶ **OVERALL 69%**

▼ *Twack — cutting the sarnies.*



ETHING ROTTEN IN KISLEV

wizard, and obtain information and materials which will be valuable to them later on. Sounds simple doesn't it . . .

Needless to say, it isn't. Hordes of undead — who's sole intention is to turn all living creatures into unliving matter, a large band of bad tempered hobgoblins who are at war with an equally belligerent band of goblins and an encounter with a powerful necromancer are just a couple of obstacles the players will have to overcome if they are going to succeed in their mission.

The final adventure — The Champions Of Death — sees the players attempt a scouting mission which once again, seems all too simple. They are instructed to visit a town, contact a government spy and obtain a report, which they have to return to base with.

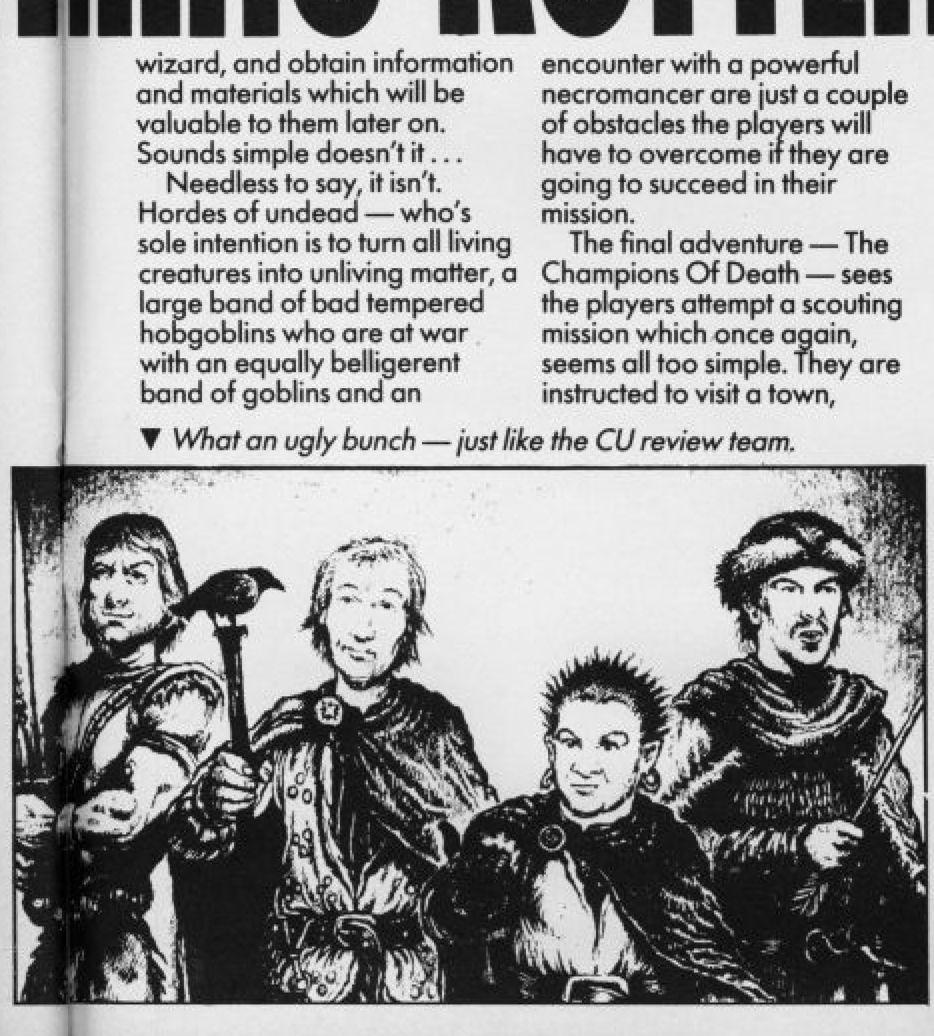
When they eventually arrive at the town they find that something is seriously amiss.

All in all *Kislev* is a well written, entertaining module. The artwork — as with all GW products — is excellent and the whole book is well put together in a lighthearted and jovial manner. Also included along with the background information and adventures are 6 pre-generated characters which are ready for immediate use.

Although I wouldn't buy the *Warhammer Fantasy Role Play Rules* on the strength of *Kislev*, I would certainly buy *Power Behind The Throne*, and like *Kislev* I would convert it so that it fits in with my favourite FRP system, as it is that good. Recommended.

- ▶ COMPLEXITY 65%
- ▶ PLAYABILITY 90%
- ▶ DESIGN 90%
- ▶ ENTERTAINMENT 85%
- ▶ **OVERALL 87%**

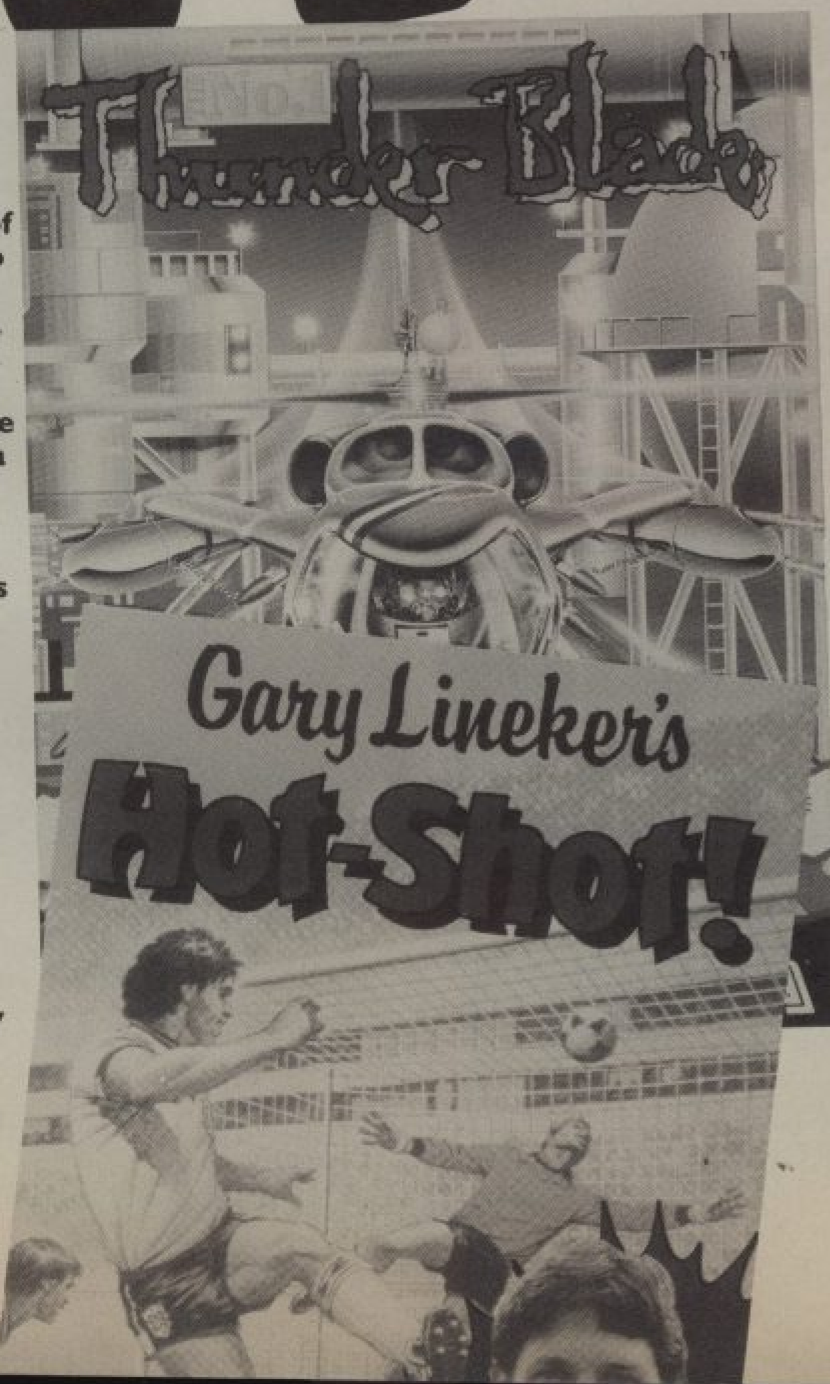
▼ *What an ugly bunch — just like the CU review team.*




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C+VG, together with some rather nice software folks have come up with a stonking good competition which will see one fortunate reader carting off 100 (yep, that's one hundred) games for his or her computer. Quite a bit of software we're sure you'll agree. Never again need you be bored enough to watch Beadle's About or Bull's Eye . . . or That's My Dog! Your computer will have no reason to be switched off ever again (except in accordance with British Standard Electrical Safety regulationn 233, paragraph 4, clause 4B).

Now, what does a fellah need to do to win a hundred games, then? Well, we'll tell you. Grab a pen and a postcard (or sealed envelope), then take a look at these hundred-related questions, jot down the answers and send them to . . .

HAPPY HUNDRED COMP, C+VG, PRIORY COURT, 30-32 FARRINGDON LANE, LONDON EC1R 3AU.

And all you readers abroad needn't worry about entering this competition, because we've put the deadline for entries waaaay back to mid-July, giving even the farthest-flung of you good time to send your entry in.

THE QUESTIONS

1. What is the Formula you would use to convert temperatures from Centigrade to Fahrenheit?
2. What zoological genus does a centipede belong to? (clue:- the answer begins with 'A')
3. What is the French word for a hundred?

The console scene is going ape at the moment. The PC Engine CD-ROM player was revealed last month and looks stunning. Now we've got the 16-bit Sega, the newest and hottest addition to the console market. Julian Rignall puts it through its paces and finds himself more than impressed.

MEGA MACHINE

16 — BIT SEGA





Sega are dominating the console market in Britain at the moment with the Master System, and their new 16-bit machine looks like it'll consolidate (no pun intended) its position when the unit is released later on this year.

The machine appeared in Japan at the end of last year, and sold out instantly. Some may find this surprising when you consider that at the moment there are only three titles currently available — *Altered Beast, Thunderblade and Space Harrier II* — but the new machine also accepts all old Sega Master systems titles (although you do need to buy a special adaptor). This is certainly an intelligent way of boosting the new Sega's library — especially as many of the 8-bit games are very good!

Oh yes, while I'm on the subject of add-ons, Sega will be releasing a CD-ROM unit in Japan later on this year — which should definitely be worth looking out for, especially when you consider what's already been done with the PC Engine CD-ROM!

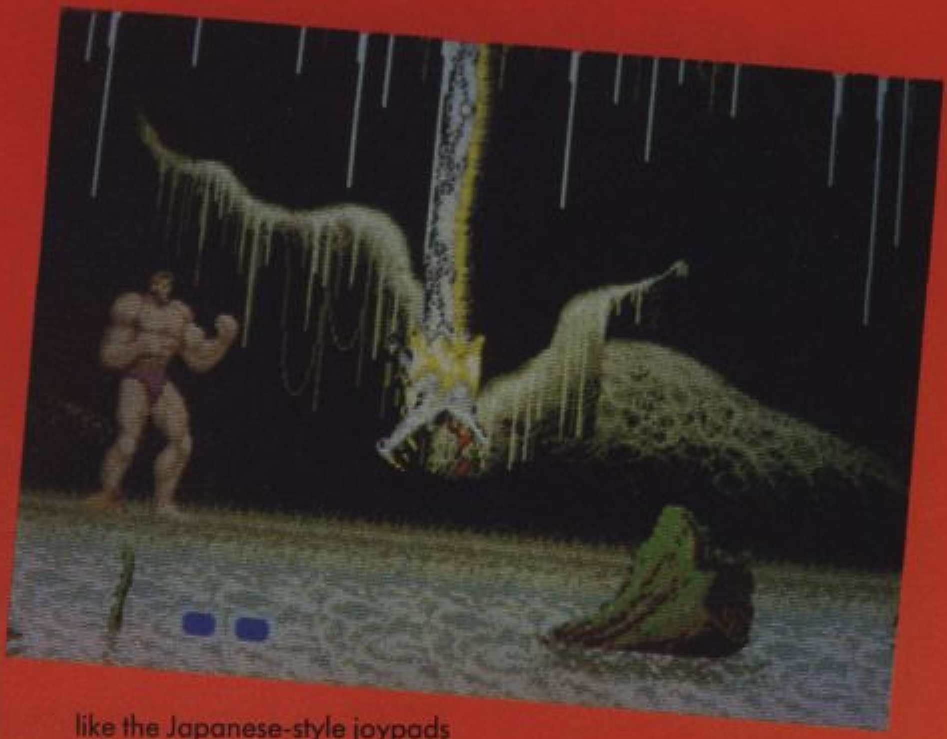
Right, onto the machine itself. As you can see, it's of an unusual design — very stylish — and the hand controller is also unusual. It's ergonomic, and fits in the hand beautifully. In fact, even those who don't

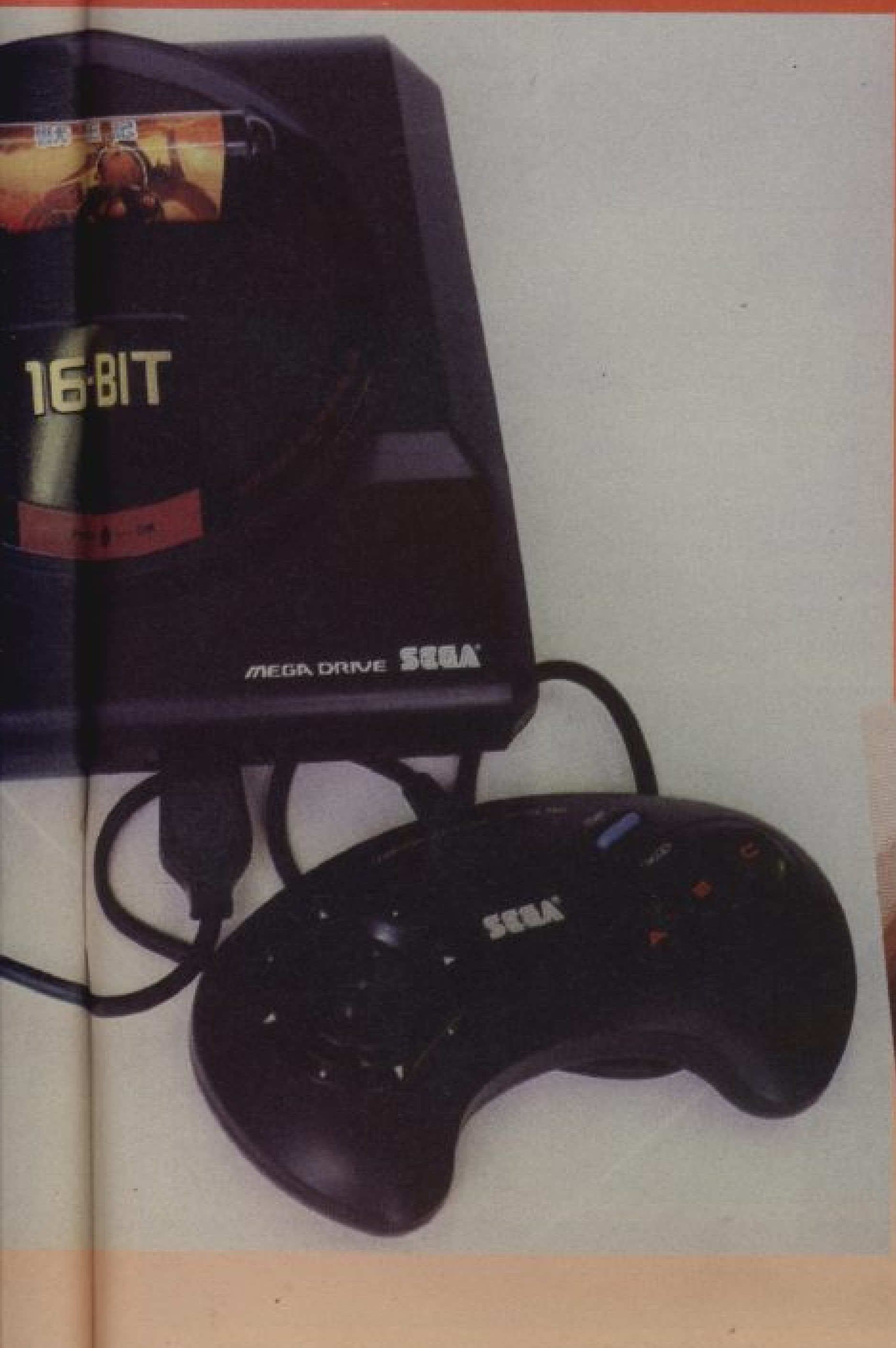


EAW

HINES

EGA STUNNA





like the Japanese-style joypads grudgingly admitted that these were pretty good. The Sega controllers feature three buttons, and the control pad is very responsive, with none of the stiffness usually associated with this type of controller.

A novel addition to the machine is a headphone socket and volume control — mind you when you hear the stereo eight — channel sound chip at full whack through 'phones, it's easy to appreciate why — the sound is absolutely incredible! In the case of *Altered Beast*, the music, effects and speech were better than the arcade version!

The machine might look fabulous and sound even better — but it's the software that counts. So how do the first three 16-bit games fare? Well, first impressions are very favourable. *Altered Beast* is exceptionally good, with looks, sounds and playability that are indistinguishable from the coin-op. The graphics are simply georgeous, with six-level parallax scrolling landscapes and beautifully drawn sprites. There's plenty going on and barely a flicker in sight. And when you consider that this is a first release for this console, the future looks very good — it's well on a par with the finest ST and Amiga releases.

Thunderblade and *Space Harrier II* are of similar quality, with smooth 3D update and wonderful graphics that put the majority of existing 16-bit titles to shame. Personally I don't rate *Thunderblade* as a particularly good arcade game, but as a convertion it's again identical to the original. *Space Harrier II* is also an excellent interpretation of the coin-op and is both highly addictive and playable.

Overall, the new Sega looks like a machine to be reckoned with. The graphics and sound potential is without doubt superb, and with the strength of Sega's arcade licences behind it, it's a machine to look out for.



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REVIEW By MICROPROSE

TANGLED TALES™

THE MISADVENTURES OF A WIZARD'S APPRENTICE

Within this lighthearted and witty fantasy role-playing adventure, Origin have cast the player in the role of a wizard's apprentice embarking on an excursion into an outlandish world of adventure and surprise.

You play the part of a struggling apprentice wizard who is given three progressively difficult tasks by his master, Eldritch, in order to become fully qualified as a wizard. You start off with no magical powers whatsoever but, as you progress through the game, you will come across haunted houses, medieval fortresses and contemporary country farms. Along the way, you will pick up spells and potions that enable you to progress further through the adventure.

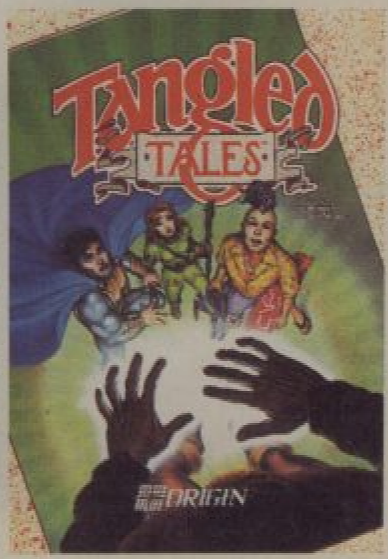
The screen is divided into three sections. As you explore, the upper right window displays a dynamic map of your surroundings. The upper left window shows what is visible to you; another character, a monster, a building, forest, etc. On entering dungeons, this window will present a moving 3-D view of your surroundings. Finally, the lower half of the screen contains a text window and control icons. This may sound complicated but provides you with a great deal of valuable information without making the screen unnecessarily cluttered. While exploring, you will meet up with other



inhabitants, each with a unique personality. Some may wish to join you in your travels, but each one will do so for a different reason. Each companion is totally autonomous; he or she will decide when he joins, how he fights (if at all), when he will provide clues and when he leaves. Some are essential if you are to succeed in achieving your ultimate goal, others may simply hinder your progress. You will come up against problems that might present the solution almost there and then, others might have you racking your brains for days until you come across some other little piece of information whilst solving another puzzle that will enable you to go back and solve the original problem.



Origin's Tangled Tales comes as a breath of fresh air amongst many long-winded and drawn out adventures – after all, how many other adventures allow you to build a snowman? The emphasis within the game is to involve you in a lot of problem solving, not force you to spend 80% of your time travelling around the land simply looking for the relevant places. This, combined with the pretty graphics and easy to use icon controller, make for an entertaining (not a word that is often used within fantasy RPG adventures) pioneering fantasy/adventure.



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MEAN MACHINES

CALIFORNIA GAMES

► **SEGA.**
► **PRICE: £24.95.**

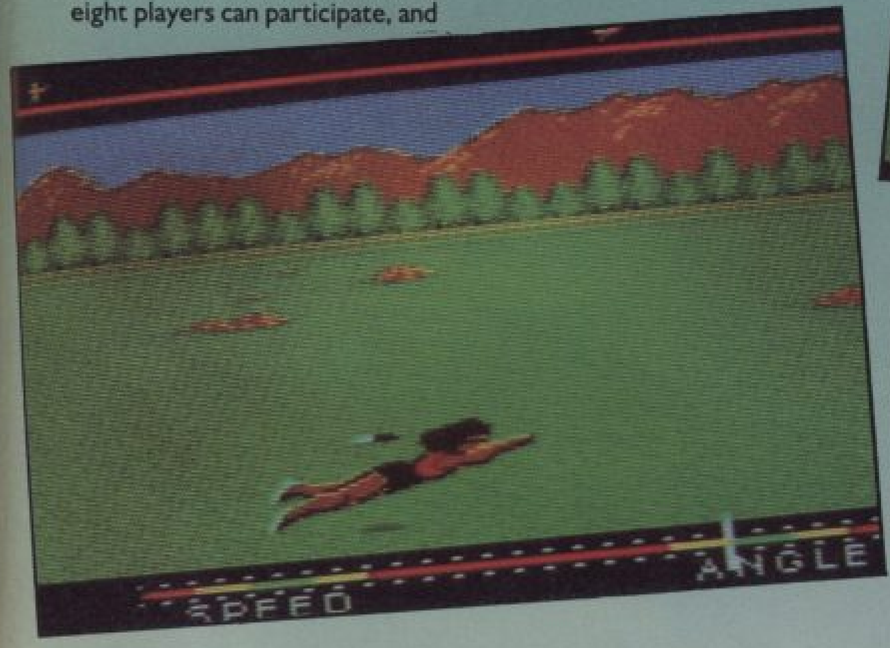
California Games is a sports simulation which features six of the West Coast's most popular pastimes — surfing, BMX riding, skateboarding, roller skating, frisbee-throwing and hackey-sacking.

The game is beautifully presented, with a wealth of options on the title screen. Up to eight players can participate, and each has to enter his or her name, and choose a sponsor (nine companies that range from Kawasaki to Casio). After that you can choose which events you'd like to play — either all of them, or just a few, and you can also choose to practice an event, or view the highscores.

The events themselves are all excellent, and boast superb graphics and some great sound. Surfing places you on a board, and the object is simply to ride a wave, performing as many tricks as possible, and staying upright for the duration of the time limit. Points are awarded for style and daring moves — the closer you are to the 'tube', the more points are awarded.

BMX riding is fun — you have to cycle along a horizontally scrolling course performing as many stunts as you can. There are plenty of hazards to avoid, and you're allowed to crash three times before the event is over.





Skateboarding places you in a half-pipe, with the objective to complete as many stunts as possible within the time limit. You're allowed three falls.

Roller skating is similar to the BMX event, with you controlling a luscious leggy Californian girlie as she skates along the boardwalk.

Next is frisbee-throwing, with you controlling both the thrower and catcher. A good degree of skill and timing is necessary to catch the flying disk — you have three attempts.

Last of all is hackey sacking. Controlling a large on-screen person, the idea is to kick and head a small foot bag and perform as many trick moves as possible. Bonus points are awarded for the complexity of the moves, and you have a minute and a quarter time limit.

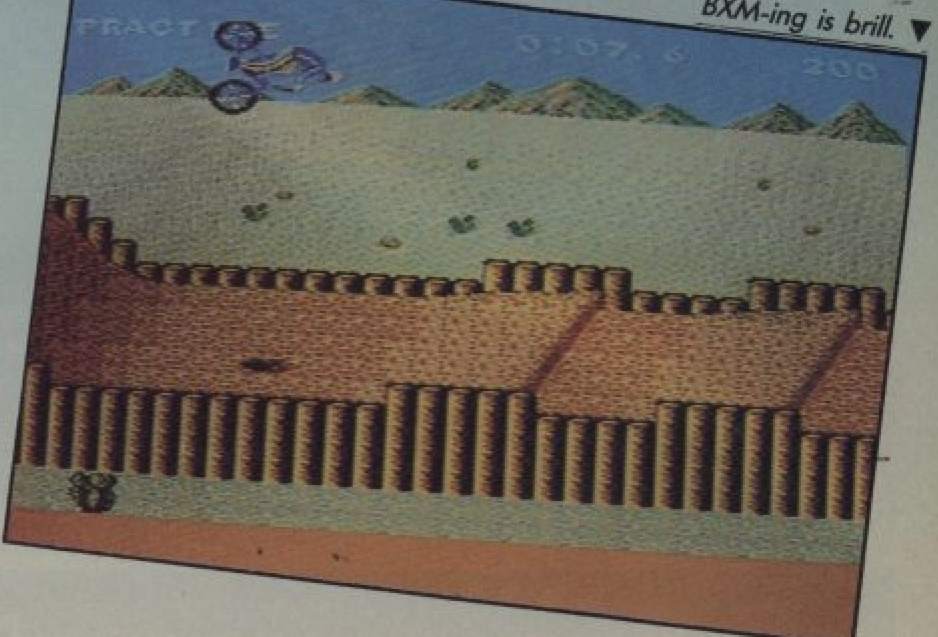
C+VG HIT!

If you break a record, your name is entered on the highscore table, and you get a chance to stop three spinning tiles, whose faces change randomly. If you manage to match all three, you get enhancements to either hackey sacking, BMXing or surfing.

To put it bluntly, California Games is the best Sega game to date, combining six superb games, stunning graphics and animation, and a variety of excellent tunes and sound effects. The events are all highly playable, and had me glued to the Sega for hours. Don't miss it.

JULIAN RIGNALL

SEGA	
► GRAPHICS	96%
► SOUND	87%
► VALUE	85%
► PLAYABILITY	94%
► **OVERALL**	**93%**



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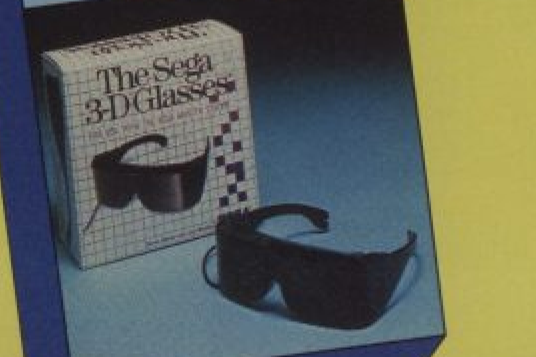
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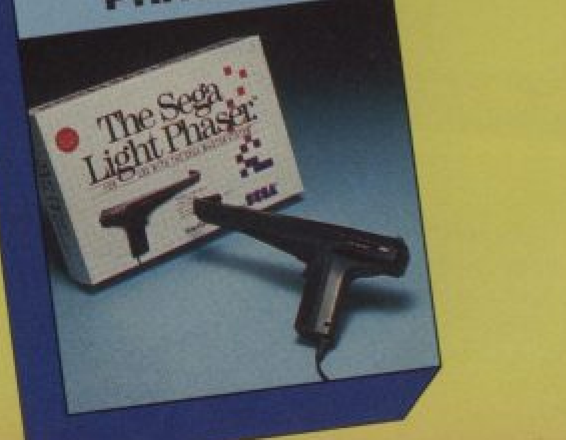
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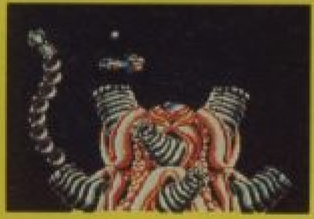
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RAMPAGE

You and your buddy are ready for a little action tonight 'cause you just happen to be in the mood to tear up the town. You'll demolish buildings, grab and chomp horrified spectactors and other yummy morsels, and flatten puny helicopters and other antagonists who try to stop you!

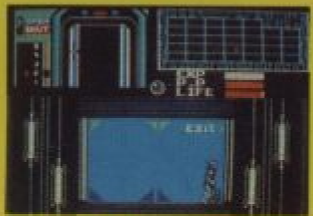
Addictive gameplay, marvellous graphics combined with originality and a great sense of humour! C+VG, March 1989



'R' TYPE

They came from a Dimensional plane clear across the galaxy, wreaking havoc and chaos from star system to star system. With an evil that smothers all resistance with fear and terror, the horrid creatures of the Bydo Empire are now knocking on, Earth's front door.

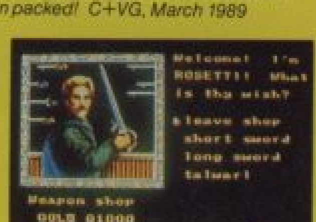
Is by far the best blast available on the Sega, so it goes without saying that no shoot 'em up fan should be without it! C+VG, March 1989



CYBORG HUNTER

The year, 2242 you are Paladin, the toughest bounty hunter in the galaxy. Monstrous Cybags are threatening to take control of the Universe under the direction of their evil leader, Vipron. Your mission is to gain access to Vipron's chambers and destroy him. Sound easy enough? It isn't!

Horizontally scrolling arcade adventure, action packed! C+VG, March 1989



Y's

You are Aron Christian, a swordsman washed ashore by the might and fury of a hurricane. You were found half dead by a kind and humble fisherman and he restored you to health. The fishing village sat at the edge of the great plain. Rising in the distance was a small mountain range with an ominous tower at its peak. 'That is the Tower of the Doomed', the fisherman told you as they made the sign of the evil eye. 'It is the place where the troubles of our land began.' As you watched the tower, you knew that your destiny waited there.

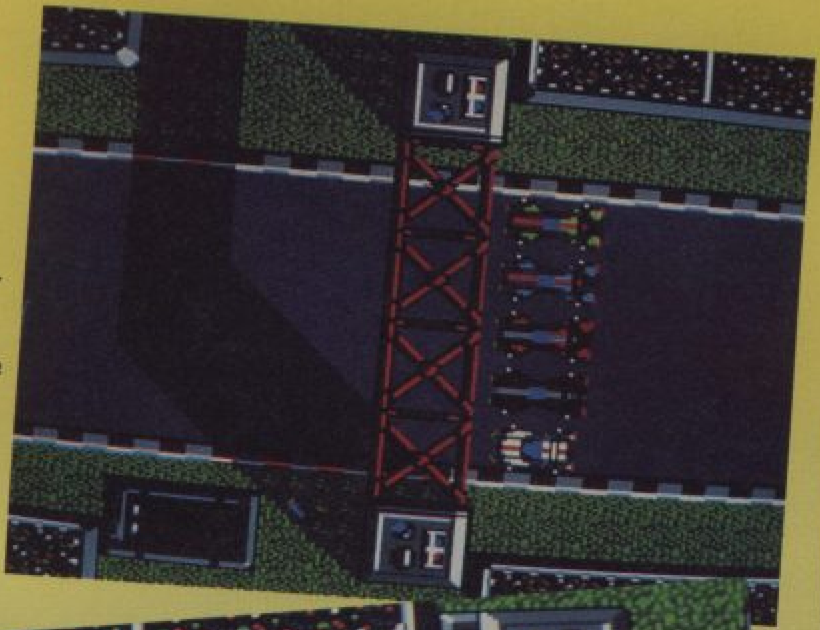
The whole thing looks incredible – the best I've seen on the Sega. Y's offers depth and playability and will keep you engrossed for weeks. It's a must! C+VG, March 1989

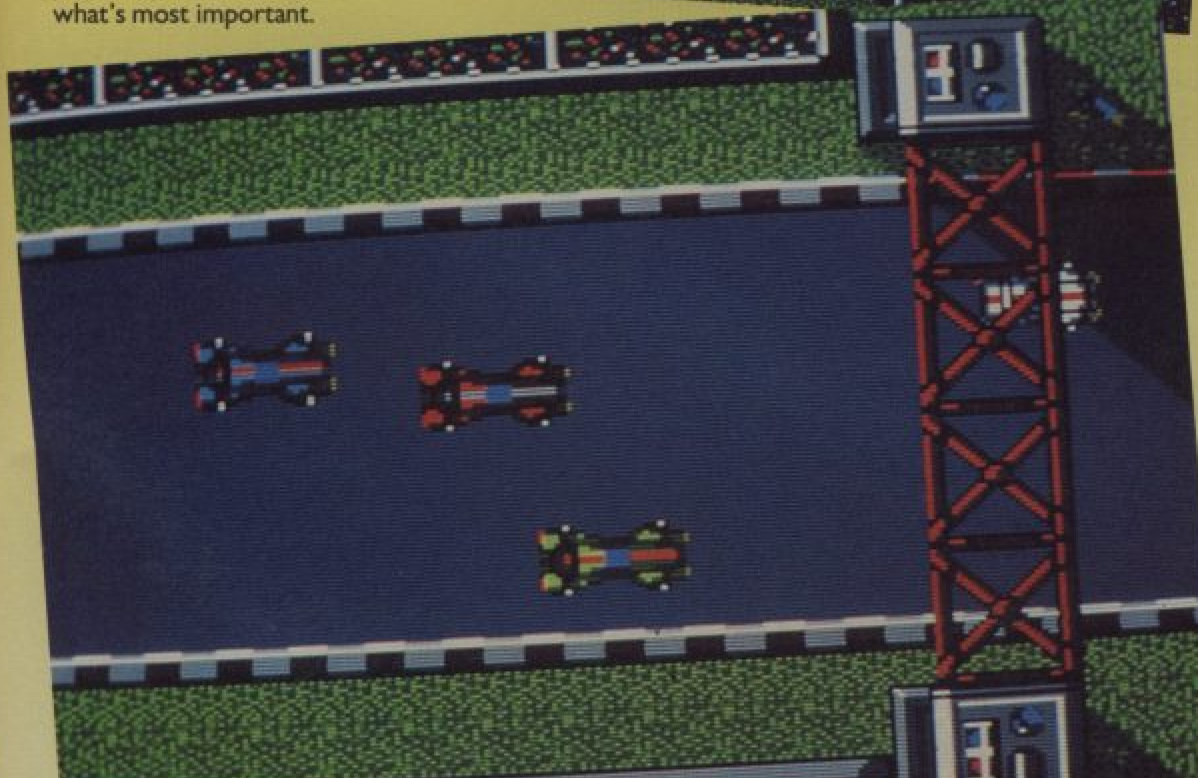
MEAN MACHINES

MOTOR ROADER

► PC ENGINE
► PES £24.05,
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This must be a first — a five-player racing game! Yes indeedee, grab a PC Engine five-player adaptor, slap in your joypads and you can take on another four drivers at the same time with hilarious results. It doesn't look stunning, with an overhead view of five blocky cars and a simple race track. But as seems to be the case with all PC Engine games, it plays very well — and that's what's most important.





At the start of a game up to five players input their names, and a preview of the track is shown, so you can get some ideas of the hazards to come. Then the players take turns to buy extra equipment from a $5000 budget. There are plenty of extra things to buy — brakes, engines, and special weapons to blow the opposition off the rack.

As the cars zoom down the multi directionally scrolling track, it's inevitable that the incompetent drivers get left



behind — If this happens and they touch the end of the screen, the car is warped forward to the middle of the screen. If this happens to you, your warp total decreases by one (usually you have 40 of these 'lives'), and when you've used up all the warps, the game ends.

Points and cash are awarded at the finish of the race — the better your finishing position, the more spondoolicks you get. And,



of course, if you continue to do well, you can kit your car out with better equipment.

In one-player mode, the game is still very enjoyable and addictive, with four competent computer opponents.
Of course, multi-player is where the game really comes into its own — and you soon find out who your friends really are!!

Speed fiends are recommended to take *Moto Roader* for a test drive.

JULIAN RIGNALL

PC ENGINE

► GRAPHICS	68%
► SOUND	86%
► VALUE	74%
► PLAYABILITY	82%
► OVERALL	78%



▲ *Only four levels . . .*

ALTERED BEAST

▶ **SEGA, £24.95**

In many ways, *Altered Beast* is similar to *Vigilante*, with you punching and kicking your way across horizontally scrolling landscapes, disposing of the giant baddies at the end of each.

At the start of the game you're commanded to 'rise from the grave and rescue my daughter' by a nameless grey-haired crumbly.

The first opponents are zombies, swiftly followed by ghouls who carry their heads underarm. They're pretty ghastly fellows, and attempt to punch the hero and wear away his energy bar, which results in the loss of one of his three lives. Soon come bigger creatures, followed by dogs.

Occasionally a white dog appears — kick or punch this and a blue orb is released which is collected to power up your man. The first orb turns the hero into a hulking great Schwartzenegger clone with a pin head, the second leads to a stunning screen which shows the hero being transformed into a were-creature — on the first level a werewolf.

When you're transformed into this creature you're given two special powers which are highly useful against the evil marauding hordes. Eventually a wicked purple-robed magician appears — destroy him and you confront the end-of-level baddie who must be destroyed to go onto the next level.

On subsequent levels you're transformed into a weredragon, weretiger and gold werewolf respectively; and if you destroy the fourth guardian you're deemed to have completed your mission.

I love arcade *Altered Beast*, but found this conversion a great disappointment. The graphics are alright — a bit indistinct at times and the sound is excellent, but the game plays rather slowly and is marred by some annoyingly tight collision detection. There just isn't enough game for your money.

JULIAN RIGNALL

SEGA	
▶ GRAPHICS	78%
▶ SOUND	88%
▶ VALUE	51%
▶ PLAYABILITY	58%
▶ **OVERALL**	**60%**



▼ *Altered Beast — disappointing.*

MEGA MACHINES

TIME SOLDIERS

▶ **SEGA, £24.95**

A fate worse than death has befallen five Earth Command Troopers — galactic conqueror, Gylend, has transformed them into cricket balls, thus playing havoc with their marksmanship and general combat abilities. Not only that, Gylend also cast them into a space-time vortex and the intrepid spheroids are now languishing in various unfashionable eras of Earth's history.

Time Soldiers is a one or two-player shoot 'em up which casts you and your co-player as two troopers who escaped Gylend's naughtiness and now search for their missing comrades, armed only with a rapid-fire bazooka and a time scanner.

At the start of the hunt for each trooper, the time scanner informs you in which time zone they are lost, and you are immediately transported to a different one! Handy, eh? Each time zone is split into three sections, each piled high with period enemies — cavemen and dinosaurs in the prehistoric era, legionnaires in the Roman age and so on.

Certain bad guys leave behind power-ups when shot, including rocket launchers, speed-ups and three-way firepower, which can be used alongside the standard bazooka. However, they have a limited ammunition supply, so they have to be used sparingly if they're to last to the end of a section.

The end of the section is, of course, where the boss monster appears. In true boss monster style, they are big and deadly and take a lot of hits before they expire. When you do at last kill them a time portal appears, which gives you a chance to jump to another time zone. If you don't need to warp, you can continue to the next of the three sections.

At the end of the third section in a time zone, the ultimate baddie appears, wielding his own

▼ *Time Soldiers.*





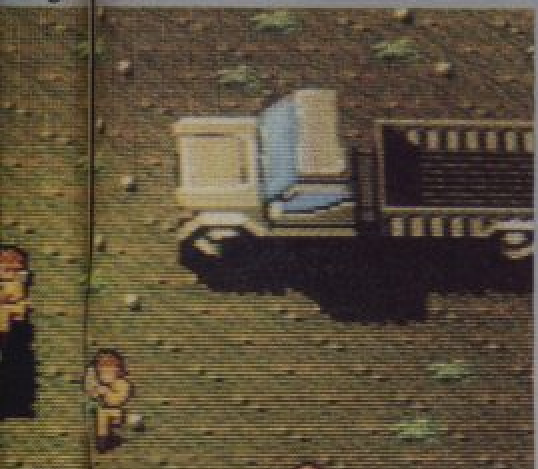
▲ *A god b*

AW

HINES



▲ A good blast.



super weapon. Repeated head-blasting is required to total these guys, but when they eventually fall you're reunited with your missing comrade.

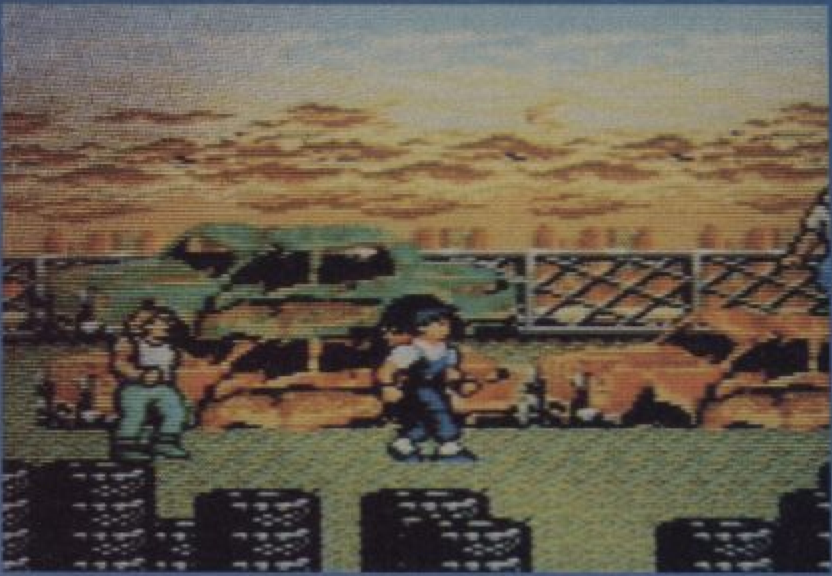
As a conversion of the Denshi coin-op, this is a very competent piece of programming.

As usual, the two-player element adds a lot to the game, and if you're likely to have a friend around who's willing to accompany you, *Time Soldiers* is well worth a purchase.

PAUL GLANCEY

SEGA

▶ GRAPHICS:	77%
▶ SOUND:	65%
▶ VALUE:	72%
▶ PLAYABILITY:	78%
▶ **OVERALL:**	**73%**



▲ *Vigilante — fun, but limited.*

VIGILANTE

▶ SEGA £24.95

I've become a big *Vigilante* fan since the PC Engine version arrived in the offices last month — and I've been awaiting the Sega version with anticipation. However, when I finally played it I came away with mixed feelings.

If you didn't read last month's C +VG (naughty, naughty), you won't know that *Vigilante* is a five-level horizontally scrolling beat 'em up in the same mould as the ageing arcade game, *Kung-Fu Master*. The objective is to walk through each level, kicking and punching a variety of thugs and the big end-of-level baddies, and rescue your girlfriend Madonna, who is bound to a crane on the final screen.

If you manage to beat the aptly-named Mr Big on the last level, you can rescue her — fail, and she's doomed.

The arcade game is one of the fastest beat 'em ups around, but unfortunately the Sega version has speed restrictions. The controls are sluggish, which makes the game quite tricky, and the collision detection is very finnicky — sometimes your kicks and punches seem to go through opponents, which causes immense frustration.

A flaw, which incidentally also applies to the PC Engine version, is that it's too easy. There's a continue option, which means you can easily go all the way through the game — I did on my first go!

Vigilante is nonetheless an enjoyable game — it's just a shame that it's marred. The graphics are pretty good — the backdrops are colourful and the sprites are nicely detailed, if a bit flickery at times, and the soundtrack is a note-for-note rendition of the aracade music.

Fans of arcade violence should enjoy *Vigilante* — but I don't think it'll appeal to anyone else.

JULIAN RIGNALL

SEGA

▶ GRAPHICS	81%
▶ SOUND	81%
▶ VALUE	57%
▶ PLAYABILITY	69%
▶ **OVERALL**	**67%**

▼ *Plenty of punching and kicking.*



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Next Month



Indiana Jones is back and he'll be galloping off the cover of the sunny, summertime June issue of C+VG! Inside we'll be having an exclusive look at US Gold's game of the new Indy film, Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade which will be hitting the shelves in the autumn. We're promised action, adventure and more do-gooding than you could crack a bull-whip at.

As well as this, we'll have the usual pile of previews, news and reviews of all the latest stuff on the home micros, consoles and arcades. Then there's a ton of tips, hints and maps to help you play the best games around.

So, mark May 16th as an important date in your diary, and get down to the newsagent bright and early with £1.20 in your palm. Well, you wouldn't want to miss out on all this, would you?

Out To Lunch

Out to lunch isn't the word! John Minson goes completely ga-ga at the would-be censors of your screens. The culprits? The Sunday Times and the West German Government. The solution? Read on!

This was going to be one of those nice cosy columns. I'd planned to talk about sport simulations. About Gamestar's home-run hitting baseball sim, Pete Rose Pennant Fever, and Firebird's equally excellent 3D Pool.

But then an item appeared in The Sunday Times which was a bigger load of balls than than any sports simulation ever. Once again the national press had found the wrong way to report the computer industry and the repercussions could be deadlier than the most dangerous virus.

'Children tune in to computer porn' the headline screamed. 'Hard core pornographic pictures that can be viewed by children with home computers are available by making a telelphone call.' And my first reaction? Give me the number!

No, not because I want to ogle pixel pretties, this was strictly in the interests of journalism. In almost five years as a micro hack I've still to see anything more salacious than Sam Fox's attributes clashing in low res.

Now the reason I've never witnessed Spectrum smut could be that I'm a sweet little innocent (sure! — Ed). So I asked around — "Got any dodgy disks, mate?" After hours of dirty mac work the only 'computer porn' I could find was for the dirty Mac — at over two grand, hardly a kids' computer. And even then it didn't rate as 'hard core'!

What has happened for the Sunday Times (stablemate of such serious guardians of the nation's morals as The Sun and News of the World) to get its knicks in twist? I have no doubt that their fearless crusading journos did discover 'nearly 100 titles, such as Raw Sex and Madam Fifi's Whore House Adventure.' After all, if people can digitise with their Amiga or ST; some horrible hacker is sure to scan the latest Scan magazine.

But a major menace? The only threat I perceive is hysterical technophobia fanned by such articles.

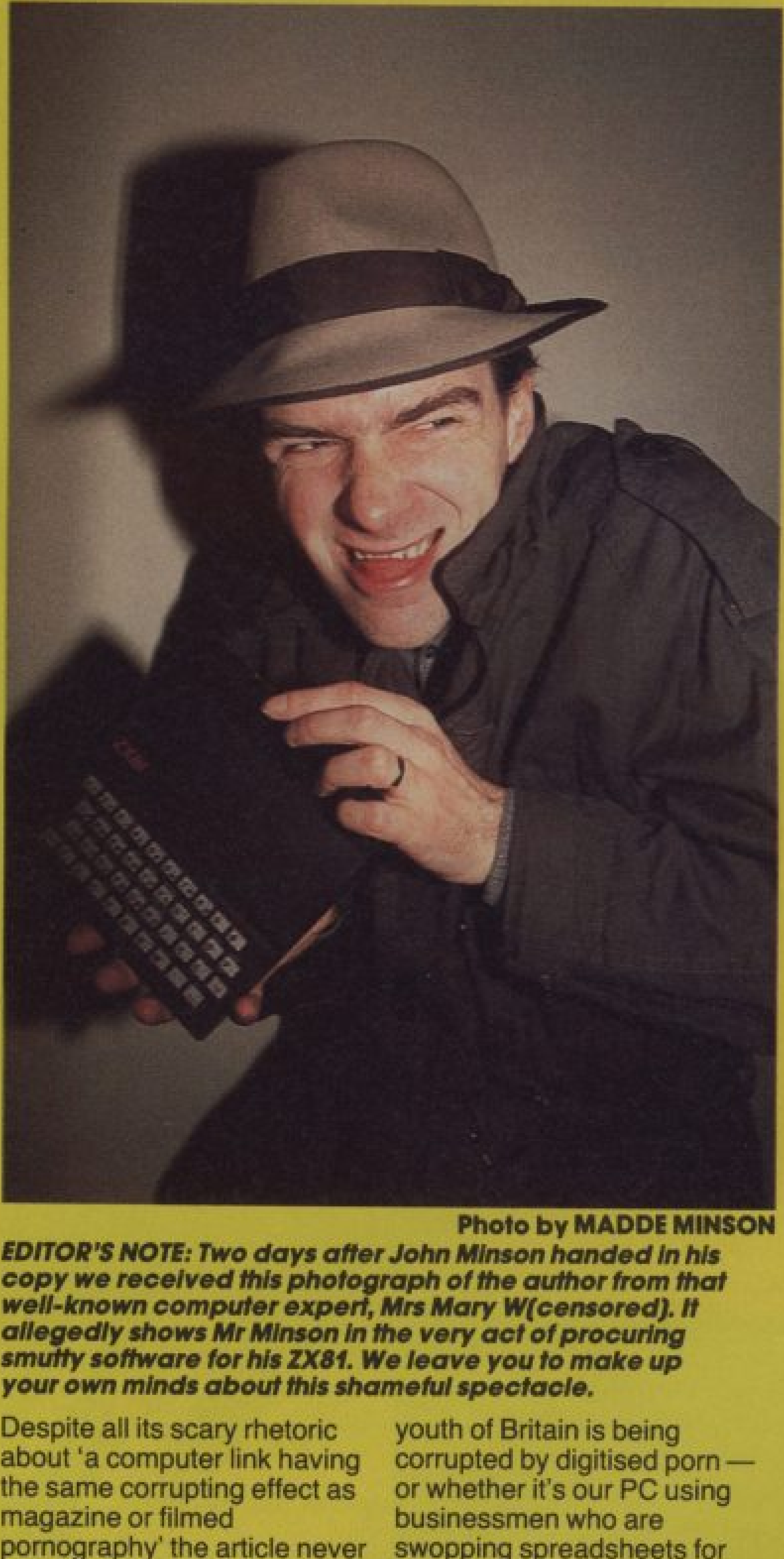


Photo by MADDE MINSON

EDITOR'S NOTE: Two days after John Minson handed in his copy we received this photograph of the author from that well-known computer expert, Mrs Mary W(censored). It allegedly shows Mr Minson in the very act of procuring smutty software for his ZX81. We leave you to make up your own minds about this shameful spectacle.

Despite all its scary rhetoric about 'a computer link having the same corrupting effect as magazine or filmed pornography' the article never once mentions what machines this porn is for. Is it for Speckly Spectrums? Adult-rated Amigas and Ataris? What about naughty Nintendo cartridges?

Without knowing the formats involved it's a bit difficult to tell whether the youth of Britain is being corrupted by digitised porn — or whether it's our PC using businessmen who are swopping spreadsheets for spread legs!

This isn't the only case of computer silliness to hit the headlines recently. Not long ago august industry organ CTW published an item about brave customs officers seizing copies of Sex Vixens from Space. They said they were 'protecting the youth of today'. Youth of today, rejoice! You're protected.

It's not just Britain and our eternal bête noir, naughty bits, either. Germany has had a long running battle with those perverters of youth at Microprose, who have used their so-called simulation Silent Service to tempt fine, upstanding Aryan hackers to buy surplus submarines and indulge in a little serious inner city vandalism of a Saturday night.

Now the Germans have gone further. They realised that all the little Erics were being brainwashed by a magazine as well, so they stuffed it away on the top shelves of the sex shops. The magazine in question? You're holding it in your hands. Yup, C&VG can deprave and corrupt — official!

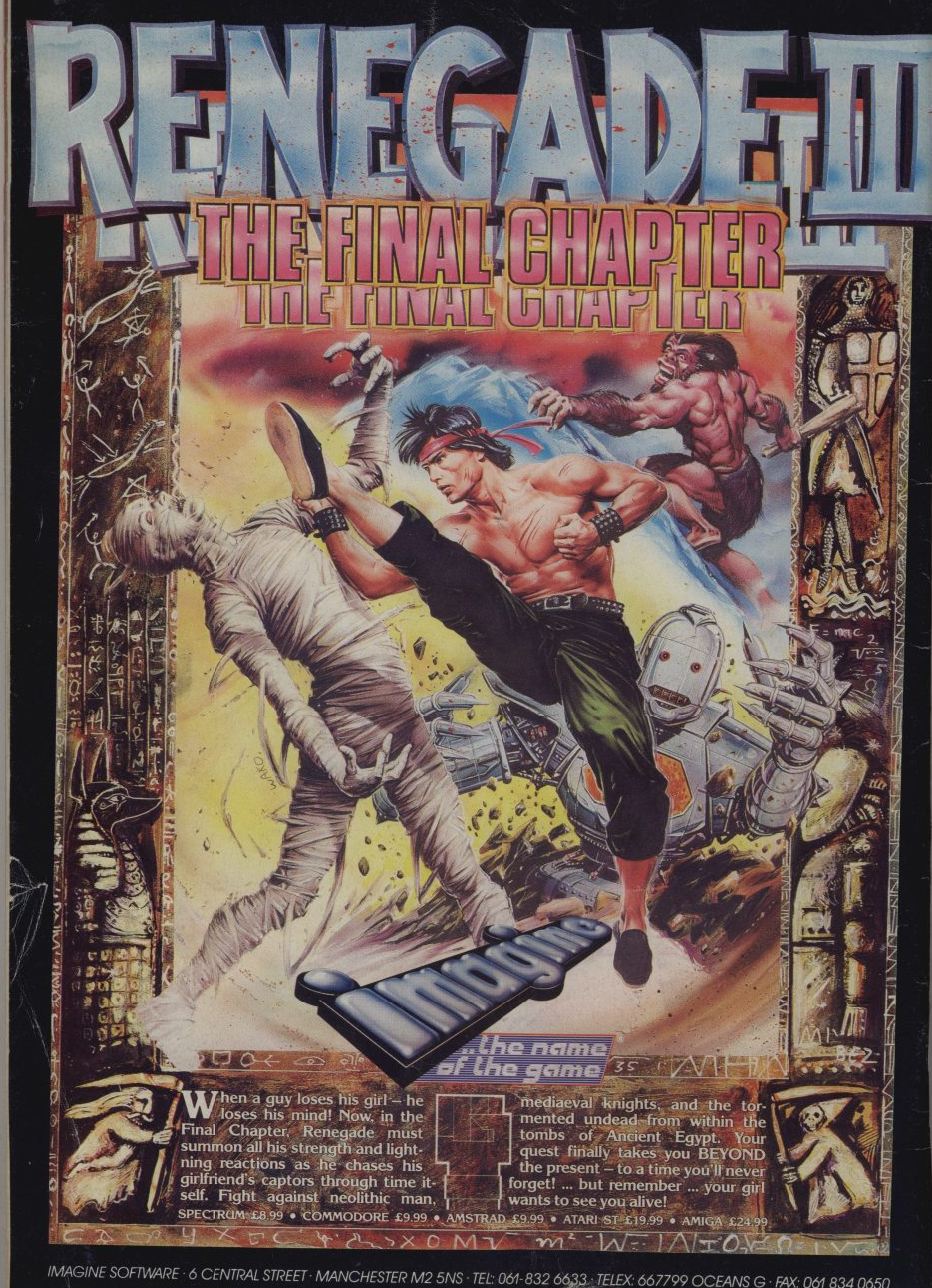
Seriously though — the German authorities have got their lederhosen in just as much of a twist as the British press.

I think the answer has to be the most frightening thing in the world — ignorance! It's lack of information that leads people to swallow the half-truths and adopt opinions that are based on wrong assumptions. Tell people enough scare stories about something they don't understand and sure enough they'll get scared.

Now I'm not saying that there's any particular value in looking at pornographic images. But I am an advocate of freedom of speech. And another thing — why do people get so angry?.

You and I know thate's no real problem with computer porn. Let's help the victims of the scare mongers to see that too. Introduce your parents to your Amiga. Show them your ST is saintly. Make them make friends with your micro, so that next time some hack gets on their high horse you can all laugh about it together. Otherwise baseball or pool may mark the boundaries of your censored computer gaming!


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